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THE LAY OF THE LAST MINSTREL

MARMION

THE LADY OF THE LAKE



### The Classic Series.

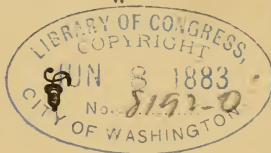
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*"There are no books for boys like these Poems by SIR WALTER SCOTT. Every boy likes them if they are not put into his hands too late. They surpass everything for boy reading."*—RALPH WALDO EMERSON.



*THE LAY OF  
THE LAST MINSTREL  
MARMION  
THE LADY OF THE LAKE*

BY  
✓  
SIR WALTER SCOTT



*BOSTON*  
ROBERTS BROTHERS

1883

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# THE LAY OF THE LAST MINSTREL:

A POEM.

*IN SIX CANTOS.*

Dum relego, scripsisse pudet; quia plurima cerno,  
Me quoque, qui feci, iudice, digna lini.

## PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION.

*The Poem now offered to the Public, is intended to illustrate the customs and manners which anciently prevailed on the Borders of England and Scotland. The inhabitants, living in a state partly pastoral and partly warlike, and combining habits of constant depredation with the influence of a rude spirit of chivalry, were often engaged in scenes highly susceptible of poetical ornament. As the description of scenery and manners was more the object of the Author than a combined and regular narrative, the plan of the Ancient Metrical Romance was adopted, which allows greater latitude, in this respect, than would be consistent with the dignity of a regular Poem. The same model offered other facilities, as it permits an occasional alteration of measure, which, in some degree, authorizes the change of rhythm in the text. The machinery, also, adopted from popular belief, would have seemed puerile in a Poem which did not partake of the rudeness of the old Ballad, or Metrical Romance.*

*For these reasons, the Poem was put into the mouth of an ancient Minstrel, the last of the race, who, as he is supposed to have survived the Revolution, might have caught somewhat of the refinement of modern poetry without losing the simplicity of his original model. The date of the Tale itself is about the middle of the sixteenth century, when most of the personages actually flourished. The time occupied in the action is Three Nights and Three Days.*



## THE LAY OF THE LAST MINSTREL.

A PECULIAR interest attaches to "The Lay of the Last Minstrel," not only as the first disclosure of the poet's powers, but as that, among all his works, which is perhaps most closely identified with his personal career and character. Even if Scott had not himself told us, it would not be difficult to trace the various influences under which he composed this poem. His grandmother, in whose youth the Border raids were still matters of comparatively recent tradition, used to amuse him with many a tale of Watt of Harden, Wight Willie of Aikwood, Jamie Telfer of the fair Dodhead, and other Moss-trooping heroes. This prepared his mind for the deep impression which was made on it, when he was about twelve years old, by Percy's "Reliques of Ancient Poetry." It was under a large platanus-tree in his aunt's garden at Kelso that he first read them, forgetting even the dinner-hour in his enjoyment of this new treasure. "To read and to remember was in this instance," he says, "the same thing, and henceforth I overwhelmed my school-fellows, and all who would hearken to me, with tragical recitations from the ballads of Bishop Percy. The first time, too, I could scrape a few shillings together, which were not common occurrences with me, I bought unto myself a copy of these beloved volumes; nor do I believe I ever read a book half so frequently, or with half the enthusiasm."

In the compilation of his own Border minstrelsy he followed the impulse thus derived; and when, after having for some years dabbled in poetry, he aspired to distinguish himself by something higher than mere translations or occasional verses, his partiality for the Border legends governed his choice of a subject as well as the style of treatment. He hesitated for a while as to the particular story he should illustrate, but all those he thought of belonged to the same class. At one time he contemplated "a Border ballad, in the comic manner," founded on his ancestor's (Sir William Scott, of Harden) marriage with ugly Meg Murray, as the alternative of being hanged by his father-in-law. But finally he decided on "a romance of Border chivalry, in a light-horseman sort of stanza." Having, at the request of the Countess of Dalkeith, undertaken a ballad about the adventures of a brownie or goblin, called Gilpin Horner, he was discouraged in the attempt by the apparent coldness with which his two friends, Erskine and Cranstoun, listened to the first stanzas, and abandoned the idea till tempted to resume it by learning that, on second thoughts, his critics had formed a more favorable opinion of the effort. He applied himself to the work as

an amusement during his enforced leisure, when disabled by the kick of a horse at yeomanry drill on Portobello Sands. As soon as he got into the vein, he dashed it off at the rate of about a canto a week. The goblin page sank into a mere minor feature as the poem grew upon his hands. The metre was borrowed from Coleridge's "Lady Christabel." The beautiful freedom and variety of this metre Scott appreciated all the more, because it enabled him to introduce much of the style and phraseology of the old minstrels. The ballad measure in quatrains, which at first naturally suggested itself, was set aside as too hackneyed and wearisome for a composition of any length. Against the measured short line, or octosyllabic verse, there was the objection of the "fatal facility," to use Scott's own phrase, with which it was written, the temptation it offered to mere verbiage, and its monotonous and namby-pamby effect. Shakespeare had laughed at it as the "butter-woman's rate to market," and the "very false gallop of verses," and Scott felt that his muse demanded a more stirring and varied measure. "Christabel" was not published till 1816; but a year or two before Scott began the "Lay" he had heard Sir John Stoddart recite some parts of it, which made a deep impression on his mind. He saw that Coleridge had remedied all the defects of the octo-syllabic measure, by freeing it from its rigid formality, and dividing it by time instead of syllables; by the beat of four, as Leigh Hunt remarks, into which you might get as many syllables as you could, instead of allotting eight syllables to the poor time, whatever it might have to say, varying it further with alternate rhymes and stanzas, with rests and omissions, precisely analogous to those in music. The old bard himself was an afterthought. He was introduced as a sort of "pitch-pipe" to indicate the tone and character of the composition.

In the poem the reader will find a romantic picture of the Borderers, in the best aspect of their character. Their name, like that of the kindred rovers of the sea, is "linked with one virtue and a thousand crimes." Scott has brought out the solitary virtue—dauntless bravery—into the foreground, and has thrown the crimes into the shade. Here we may offer some prosaic observations on their real character. At first national feuds lent a justification to the Border raids. It was in the spirit of patriotism that the men on each side of the Cheviots harried one another's homes, and drove off one another's cattle. The instinct of hostility survived long after the two countries were at peace, and was quickened by the love of plunder. At the period of the following tale, they had degenerated into mere robbers, whom the rulers on both sides of the Border alike denounced. The best that can be said for them is that they had inherited the traditions of rapine which they sought to perpetuate; that what philosophers call the doctrine of "continuity" was responsible for much of their wild temper; and that the savage habits which had been transmitted through generations were not readily uprooted:—

"There never was a time on the March partes,  
Sen the Douglas and the Percy met,  
But yt was marvell yt the redde blude rounne not  
As the rane does in the street."

Nursed with such a lullaby, it seemed to these wild Borderers only a law of nature that Scots and English should prey upon each other, and this ferocious spirit soon expanded into an impartial appetite for plunder, and general antagonism to society. And so it came about that a Scott learned to have as little compunction in "lighting to bed" a Kerr as a Græme. They had their own domestic raids and blood-feuds or disputes, as over the Border. It was, in truth, a restless, cruel, wild-beast kind of existence, that called forth all the worst passions, and could have been bearable only through a brutish insensibility and indifference to danger. They carried their life in their hands, and none could tell whether to a week's end he could call his kine his own. "They are like to Job," says Fuller, quaintly, "not in piety and patience, but in sudden plenty and poverty; sometimes having flocks and herds in the morning, none at night, and perchance many again next day." It was with some surprise, in the midst of vexation, that Wat Tinlinn reflected that his little lonely tower had not been burned for a year and more: and the old song tells the common experience for which every borderer had to be prepared: —

"Last night I saw a sorry sight —  
Nought left me o' four-and-twenty guide ousen and kye;  
My weel-riden gelding, and a white grey,  
But a toom byre and a wide,  
And the twelve nogs on ilka side.  
Fy, lads! shout a' a' a' a' a'  
My gear's a' gane."

Religion, of course, in any true sense of the term, was hardly to be looked for in such a class. "They come to church," says Fuller, "as seldom as the 29th of February comes into the calendar." Yet they were not without their superstitions; and, however wanting in real piety, could patter an Ave Maria and finger their beads as they rode to a plundering foray. Their sense of honor could hardly have been very strong, and was certainly exceptional. But they had, at least, a sense of the sacredness of hospitality, and the protection which a host owes to his guest. Even the author of the "Worthies" owns that "indeed, if they promise safely to conduct a traveller, they will perform it with the fidelity of a Turkish Janizary; otherwise, woe be to him that falleth into their quarters." "They are," he adds, "a nest of hornets; strike one, and stir all of them about your ears. . . . Yet these Moss-troopers, if possibly they could procure the pardon for a condemned person of their company, would advance great sums out of their common stock, who, in such a case, cast in their lots among themselves; and all have one purse." So that, in spite of their domestic differences, there was a sort of union amongst them. The term Moss-troopers is evidently derived from the mosses among which they lived, and the companies in which they went about harrying. It was owing mainly to the vigorous measures of Belted Will, Earl of Carlisle, that the raiders were put down. The last public mention of Moss-troopers occurs during the civil wars of the 17th century, when many ordinances of Parliament were directed against them.

The region in which the scene of the poem is laid was as familiar

and dear to Scott as the legends with which it is associated. His first consciousness of existence dated, as he himself has told us, from Sandy Knowe. In early manhood a "raid" into Liddesdale was the favorite object of a vacation ramble. At Ashestiel he spent the first happy years of wedlock : in Abbotsford he sought to realize one of the great ambitions of his life ; and Dryburgh incloses his remains. The Border Union Railway now traverses the district from Carlisle to Hawick, and modern cultivation has somewhat softened and enriched the aspect of the landscape. The old peels and Border strongholds have been gradually crumbling away. Hawick, Selkirk, and Galashiels have risen into populous and flourishing towns, the seats of an important industry. Agriculture, though still chiefly pastoral, has encroached on many a hill-side, bogs have been drained, and coal-fields opened up. The mockery of the line—

"Rich was the soil had purple heath been grain,"

has lost most of its force, and the farmers of Liddesdale can now give a better account of their lands than the gudeman of Charlieshope — "There's mair hares than sheep on my farm ; and for the moor-fowl and the grey-fowl, they lie as thick as doos in a docket." But in Scott's time the country was much the same as in the days of the Moss-troopers. The people had outlived the old Border traditions of raids and robberies, yet in the seclusion of their valleys they preserved many of the rough reckless manners of their ancestors. Scott has painted them, in "Guy Mannering," much as they lived under his own eyes. The wildness of the region, even at the end of the last century, may be gathered from the incidents of one of the poet's raids. His gig was the first wheeled carriage that had ever been seen in Liddesdale. There was no inn or public-house of any kind in the whole valley, which was accessible only through a succession of tremendous morasses. "In the course of our grand tour, besides the risks of swamping and breaking our necks, we encountered the formidable hardships of sleeping upon peat-stacks, and eating mutton slain by no common butcher, but deprived of life by the judgment of God, as a coroner's inquest would express themselves." Scott used to boast of being sheriff of the "cairn and the scaur," and that he had strolled through the wild glens of Liddesdale "so often and so long, that he might say he had a home in every farmhouse."

The scenery of the Scottish borderland can lay claim to little grandeur. The hills are too bare to be beautiful, and too low to be very impressive. Still the wide tracts of black moss, the gray swells of moor rising into brown, round-backed hills, with here and there a stately cliff of sterner aspect, and the green pastures of the quiet glens, are not without their charm, in spite of the general bare and treeless character of the landscape, which is at first apt to disappoint the visitor from the South. Washington Irving spoke of this disappointment to his host at Abbotsford. "Scott hummed for a moment to himself, and looked grave. 'It may be pertinacity,' he said at length ; 'but to my eye, these gray hills and all this wild Border country have beauties peculiar to themselves. I like the

very nakedness of the land ; it has something bold, stern, and solitary about it. When I have been for some time in the rich scenery about Edinburgh, which is like ornamented garden land, I begin to wish myself back again among my own honest gray hills ; and if I did not see the heather at least once a year, *I think I should die !* The last words were said with an honest warmth, accompanied by a thump on the ground with his staff, by way of emphasis, that showed his heart was in his speech." That Scott was quite sensible to the sort of melancholy awe inspired by some of the more savage parts of the country is shown (if other proof were not abundant in his poems and novels) in a passage in one of his letters. Speaking of the view from the top of Minchmoor, he says : — " I assure you I have felt really oppressed with a sort of fearful loneliness when looking around the naked towering ridges of desolate barrenness which is all the eye takes in from the top of such a mountain, the patches of cultivation being hidden in the little glens, or only appearing to make one feel how feeble and ineffectual man has been to contend with the genius of the soil. It is in such a scene that the unknown and gifted author of 'Albonia' places the superstition which consists in hearing the noise of a 'chase, the baying of the hounds, the throttling sobs of the deer, the wild halloos of the huntsmen, and the

' Hoof thick beating on the hollow hill.'

I have often repeated his verses with some sensations of awe in this place." As far as his own estate was concerned, he did much by his plantations to cover the nakedness of the land, and his precept and example also helped to make planting fashionable among his neighbors.

Of Scott's power of word-painting there is, no doubt, more abundant and striking evidence in his later poems ; but the descriptions of natural scenery in the "Lay" are not only very effective, but illustrate that peculiar perception of color rather than form which has been pointed out in the very suggestive criticism of Mr. Ruskin in the "Modern Painters." Analyzing the description of Edinburgh, in "Marmion," he shows there is hardly any form, only smoke and color in the picture. "Observe," he says, "the only hints at form given throughout are in the somewhat vague words, 'ridgy, massy, close, and high,' the whole being still more obscured by modern mystery in its most tangible form of smoke. But the *colors* are all definite : note the rainbow band of them — gloomy or dusky red, sable (pure black), amethyst (pure purple), green and gold — in a noble chord throughout." Elsewhere Mr. Ruskin says, "In consequence of his unselfishness and humility, Scott's enjoyment of Nature is incomparably greater than any other poet I know. All the rest carry their cares to her, and begin maundering in her ears about their own affairs. But with Scott the love is entirely humble and unselfish. 'I, Scott, am nothing, and less than nothing : but these crags, and heaths, and clouds, how great are they, how lovely, how for ever to be beloved, only for their own silent thoughtless sake !'"

Without attempting any detailed topographical illustration of the



poem, it may be worth while to notice some of the spots of chief interest which are referred to. Newark Castle, where the old minstrel is supposed to chant his tale before the duchess, stands in ruins in its "birchen bower" on the right bank of the Yarrow — a large square tower, dismantled and unroofed, with crumbling outer wall and turrets. It was built by James II. for a hunting seat, afterwards belonged to the outlaw Murray, and has long been a possession, as it still is, of the house of Buccleuch. Newark Castle, where the imaginary minstrel poured forth his song, is included within the grounds of Bowhill, the favorite seat of another fair duchess, at whose request, when Countess of Dalkeith, Scott commenced the poem which developed into the Lay. He accordingly, says Lockhart, "shadows out his own beautiful friend in the person of her lord's ancestor, the last of the original stock of that great house; himself, the favored inmate of Bowhill, introduced certainly to the familiarity of that circle by his devotion to the poetry of a by-past age, in that of an aged minstrel seeking shelter at the gate of Newark." This is the point of many arch allusions in the poem. There is also a personal interest in the closing lines, which refer, it is believed, to the day-dream of Ashestiel — the purchase of a modest mountain farm in that neighborhood: "a hundred acres, two spare bed-rooms, with dressing-rooms, each of which will on a pinch have a couch-bed" — a dream which afterwards grew into the ambitious scheme of Abbotsford. Lockhart deems it, in one point of view, the greatest misfortune of Scott's life that the original vision was not realized; but "the success of the poem itself 'changed the spirit of his dream.'" Ashestiel, where the Lay was partly written, lies at the foot of Minchmoor, on the right bank of the Tweed.

Branksome Tower still overlooks the Langholm road, on the left bank of the Teviot, between two and three miles above Hawick. Various alterations have gradually reduced the dimensions of the building, and one square tower of massive thickness is the only part of the original structure which now remains. In the rest of the edifice the castellated style has been abandoned, and the old stronghold presents, with the exception of the towers referred to, the appearance of a handsome modern mansion. The extent of the old castle can still, however, be traced by some vestiges of its foundation. Its situation on a steep bank, surrounded by the Teviot, and flanked by a deep ravine, naturally added to its strength. The present hunting seat of the Duke of Buccleuch in this quarter is at Langholm Lodge. Branksome is celebrated in a song of Alan Ramsay's —

"As I cam' in by Teviot side,"

as well as in the Lay. About half a mile nearer Hawick, on the other bank of the river from Branksome, is the peel of Goldielands, in tolerably good preservation.

Harden Castle, another relic of the same period, and the cradle of the poet's ancestry, stands not far off on the bank of Borthwick Water, which here joins the Teviot. It takes its name from the number of hares which used to frequent the place (Harden — the ravine of hares), and is a deep, dark, narrow glen, threaded by a little mountain streamlet. The castle is perched on the top of the



steep bank, and Leyden (Scott's friend), in one of his poems, thus describes the situation :—

“Where Bortha hoarse, that loads the meads with sand,  
Rolls her red tide to Teviot's western strand,  
Through slaty hills, whose sides are shogged with thorn,  
Where springs in scattered tufts the dark-green corn,  
Towers wood-girt Harden far above the vale,  
And clouds of ravens o'er the turrets sail.”

The family of Harden is a cadet branch of the house of Buccleuch, and the heraldic allusion in the poem is to the fact that the Scotts of Harden bear their arms upon the field, while the Scotts of Buccleuch exhibit them on the bend dexter, which they adopted when the estate of Murdiestone came by marriage. One of the most famous of the Scotts of Harden was one Walter, who flourished during the reign of Queen Mary. He was a great freebooter, and used to bring his spoil to the castle on the cliff. His wife was Mary Scott, the Flower of Yarrow (one of the Scotts of Dryhope), and it is of her the well-known story is told of the production of a pair of clean spurs at dinner-time, in a covered dish, as a hint of the want of provisions, and of the way to get them. Notwithstanding his marauding life Walter seems to have prospered. He had a large estate, which was divided among his five sons. A number of the most popular of the Border songs are attributed by tradition to an infant whom he carried off in a raid, and whom his kind-hearted wife cherished as one of her own children. As illustrative of the temper of this rough old chief, Sir Walter tells a characteristic anecdote in one of the notes of the Minstrelsy. “Upon one occasion, when the village herd was driving out the cattle to pasture, the old laird heard him call loudly to drive out Harden's cow. ‘Harden's cow!’ echoed the affronted chief; ‘it is come to that pass? By my faith, they shall soon say Harden's kye’ (cows). Accordingly he sounded his bugle, set out with his followers, and next day returned with *a bow of kye and a lassen'd* (brindled) *bull*. On his return with this gallant prey he passed a very large haystack. It occurred to the provident laird that this would be extremely convenient to fodder his new stock of cattle; but, as no means of transporting it were obvious, he was fain to take leave of it with the apostrophe, now become proverbial, ‘By my saul, had ye but four feet, ye should not stand lang there!’ In short, as Froissart says of a similar class of feudal robbers, nothing came amiss to them that was not *too heavy or too hot*.” It was Auld Wat's eldest son, Sir William Scott, who was saved from being hanged for participation in a foray on the lands of Sir Gibson Murray, of Elibank, by the captor's prudent wife suggesting that it was a pity to sacrifice a young man of good estate when they might marry him to one of their three daughters, a proposal to which it did not, under the circumstances, require much argument to reconcile young Harden. Beardie, (so called from the long beard he wore in mourning for the execution of Charles I.), the poet's great-grandfather, was the grandson of Sir William Scott.

Hawick spreads itself on both sides of the Slitterick, a tributary

of the Teviot, into which it falls just below the town. Having survived repeated burnings during the heat of Border warfare, part of the Tower-inn represents, it is said, the only building which was not consumed in the great blaze of 1570. Hawick is now at the head of the "tweed" manufactories of Scotland. It has a rapidly growing population, already over 8,000, and is continually being enriched with new mills. Minto Castle, the seat of the Earl of Minto — open daily except Sunday — perched on a height, between Hawick and Selkirk, commands a fine view and is noted for its magnificent library. Minto Crag, close at hand, are a romantic series of cliffs rising suddenly above the Vale of Teviot. A small platform on a projecting crag is known as Barnhill's Bed, from a famous outlaw and robber, who lived in a strong tower beneath the rocks, of which there are some vestiges, as well as of another old peel on the summit of the heights. Of Melrose a sufficient account is given in the poem and notes. Ruskin is very angry with Scott, because, reverencing it as he did, "he yet casts one of its piscinas, puts a modern steel grate into it, and makes it his fire-place." Founded in 1136, by David I. (whose liberality in endowing churches wrung from his successor the moan that he was "a sore saint for the crown"), the abbey was finished ten years later, and was peopled with monks from Yorkshire, who, although of the reformed order, called Cistercians — the first of the class seen north of the Tweed — appear soon to have degenerated into the traditional monkish sensuality, if we may trust the jeering verse —

"The monks of Melrose made gude kail  
On Fridays when they fasted,  
Nor wanted they gude beef and ale,  
As long's their neighbours' lasted."

The abbey was destroyed by the English in 1522, rebuilt by Robert Bruce, cruelly defaced at the Reformation, but still remains one of the noblest and most interesting specimens of Gothic sculpture and architecture in Scotland. The stone of which it is built, though exposed to the weather for so many ages, retains perfect sharpness, so that even the most minute ornaments seem as entire as when newly wrought. The Abbey is the theme of a poem by Arthur Hallam, who dwells especially on its resistance to decay, and covets a similar tardy waning, till looking on the serene, thoughtful figure of the bard of Abbotsford, he

———"Knew that aweless intellect  
Hath power upon the ways of fate,  
And works through time and space uncheck'd.  
That minstrel of old chivalry,  
In the cold grave must come to lie,  
But his transmitted thoughts have part  
In the collective mind, and never shall depart."

Although Abbotsford has a greater attachment for the traveller than any other spot in the district — not even, perhaps, excepting Melrose itself — it is apt to be a disappointment. It is a very indifferent building in an architectural point of view; defective in taste

and poor in effect. It wants elevation, and, above all, repose; the eye is vexed by the composed medley of style, and by the restless pretentious effect to cram a vast deal into a limited space. Most of the pictures help to encourage an exaggerated idea of the imposing aspect of the mansion, and when the stranger sees the reality it falls far short of his expectations. For its own sake it would not be worth the while of turning out of one's road to look at it. To the associations connected with it alone, is due the interest of the place. It should be visited in the spirit of a pilgrimage, and to those who know the sad, romantic story of its creation and consequences, there is a touching interest in every relic and every chamber. How the dreams about the cottage expanded into the ambition of a castle is well known, as well as its disastrous end; the crushing load of debt, the desperate struggle to redeem it, the over-strained and shattered mind. Between the Clarty Hole when Scott first furnished it — "the naked moor, a few turnip-fields painfully reclaimed from it, a Scotch cottage and farm-yard, and some Scotch firs" — and the richly wooded domain, with its turreted chateau, into which it was gradually converted, there was a wide contrast. Whatever may be thought of the house, the surrounding plantations were a noble work, and justify the poet's enthusiasm for the work. A public road divides the mansion and *pleasance* from the main body of the park and wood. The house stands near the edge of the wooded bank, sloping down towards the Tweed. A pious pride has been taken in preserving the whole building as it was in Scott's time. The armor and weapons of all kinds are all in their old array; the same pictures hang on the walls; the books are ranged in the order familiar to the master's hand; and even the lounging-coat, the hat, walking-shoes, and staff are ready in their places. Passing through a porch, you enter the hall, which, with its stained glass, trophies of armor, blazonry of Border heroes, "who keepit the marchys of Scotland in the auld time for the kinge," and lozenge pavement of black and white marble, is the finest part of the house. A narrow, low-arched room, running quite across the building, and filled with more armor and other curiosities, leads to the drawing-room on one side, and the dining-room on the other. The latter is a handsome chamber, with a low, richly-carved roof of dark oak, spacious bow window, and numerous valuable and interesting pictures, such as the head of Mary Queen of Scots in a charger, painted by Amias Cawood the day after her decapitation; portraits of old "Beardie," Lucy Walters, the Duchess of Buccleuch, to whom the Minstrel is supposed to chant his Lay, &c. The drawing-room is panelled with cedar, and fitted with antique ebony furniture, quaint, richly carved cabinets and precious china ware. In a pleasant breakfast-room, overlooking the river, there are some good pictures by Turner, Thomson of Duddingstone, and others. The library is the largest room of the house. Some 70,000 vols. crowd its shelves. From this opens Sir Walter's private study — a snug little chamber, with no furniture, except a small writing-table, a plain arm-chair, covered with black leather, and another smaller chair — clearly indicating it as a place for work, not company. There are a few books on each side of the fire-place, and a sort of supplemental library in a gallery which

runs round three sides of the room. In a closet are preserved, under a glass case, the clothes Sir Walter wore just before his death — a broad-skirted green coat, with large buttons, plaid trousers, heavy shoes, broad-brimmed hat, and stout walking-stick. The relics set one thinking of the old man's last days in the house of which he was so proud, the kindly placid figure wheeled about, with all the dogs round him, in a chair, up and down the hall and library, saying, "Ah, I've seen much, but nothing like my ain house — give me one turn more." Much of the decoration of the house is of ancient design, some borrowed from Melrose, some from Dumfermline, Linlithgow, and Roslin. Even portions of various old edifices are worked into the building. Within the estate is the scene of the last great clan battle of the Borders, that fought in 1526 between the Earls of Angus and Home, backed the former by the Kerrs, and the other by Buccleuch. Mr. Hope Scott, Q. C., who married Scott's grand-daughter, has inherited the property.

The success of the *Lay* was beyond the most sanguine expectations of Scott's most enthusiastic admirers. In the preface of 1830, he himself estimated the sale at upwards of 30,000 copies; but Lockhart tells us that this was an under-estimate, and that in twenty-five years no fewer than 44,000 copies had been disposed of — an event with few parallels in the history of British poetry. The first edition, a magnificent quarto, of which 750 copies were printed, was quickly exhausted; eleven octavo editions, a small quarto, and a foolscap edition followed in rapid succession.

# THE LAY OF THE LAST MINSTREL.



## INTRODUCTION.

THE way was long, the wind was cold,  
The Minstrel was infirm and old;  
His wither'd cheek, and tresses gray,  
Seem'd to have known a better day;  
The harp, his sole remaining joy,  
Was carried by an orphan boy.  
The last of all the Bards was he,  
Who sung of Border chivalry;  
For, welladay! their date was fled,  
His tuneful brethren all were dead;  
And he, neglected and oppress'd,  
Wish'd to be with them, and at rest.  
No more on prancing palfrey borne,  
He caroll'd, light as lark at morn;  
No longer courted and caress'd,  
High placed in hall, a welcome guest,  
He pour'd, to lord and lady gay,  
The unpremeditated lay:  
Old times were changed, old manners gone;  
A stranger fill'd the Stuarts' throne;  
The bigots of the iron time  
Had call'd his harmless art a crime.  
A wandering Harper, scorn'd and poor,  
He begg'd his bread from door to door,  
And tuned, to please a peasant's ear,  
The harp, a king had loved to hear.

He pass'd where Newark's stately tower  
Looks out from Yarrow's birchen bower:

The Minstrel gazed with wishful eye —  
 No humbler resting-place was nigh :  
 With hesitating step at last,  
 The embattled portal arch he pass'd,  
 Whose ponderous grate and massy bar  
 Had oft roll'd back the tide of war,  
 But never closed the iron door  
 Against the desolate and poor.  
 The Duchess<sup>1</sup> mark'd his weary pace,  
 His timid mien, and reverend face,  
 And bade her page the menials tell,  
 That they should tend the old man well :  
 For she had known adversity,  
 Though born in such a high degree ;  
 In pride of power, in beauty's bloom,  
 Had wept o'er Monmouth's bloody tomb !

When kindness had his wants supplied,  
 And the old man was gratified,  
 Began to rise his minstrel pride ;  
 And he began to talk anon,  
 Of good Earl Francis,<sup>2</sup> dead and gone,  
 And of Earl Walter,<sup>3</sup> rest him, God !  
 A braver ne'er to battle rode ;  
 And how full many a tale he knew,  
 Of the old warriors of Buccleuch :  
 And, would the noble Duchess deign  
 To listen to an old man's strain,  
 Though stiff his hand, his voice though weak,  
 He thought even yet, the sooth to speak,  
 That, if she loved the harp to hear,  
 He could make music to her ear.

The humble boon was soon obtain'd ;  
 The Aged Minstrel audience gain'd.  
 But, when he reach'd the room of state,  
 Where she, with all her ladies, sate,

<sup>1</sup> Anne, Duchess of Buccleuch and Monmouth, representative of the ancient Lords of Buccleuch, and widow of the unfortunate James, Duke of Monmouth, who was beheaded in 1685.

<sup>2</sup> Francis Scott, Earl of Buccleuch, father of the Duchess.

<sup>3</sup> Walter, Earl of Buccleuch, grandfather of the Duchess, and a celebrated warrior.



Perchance he wish'd his boon denied :  
For, when to tune his harp he tried,  
His trembling hand had lost the ease,  
Which marks security to please ;  
And scenes, long past, of joy and pain,  
Came wildering o'er his aged brain —  
He tried to tune his harp in vain !  
The pitying Duchess praised its chime,  
And gave him heart, and gave him time,  
Till every string's according glee  
Was blended into harmony.  
And then, he said, he would full fain  
He could recall an ancient strain,  
He never thought to sing again.  
It was not framed for village churls,  
But for high dames and mighty earls ;  
He had play'd it to King Charles the good,  
When he kept court in Holyrood ;  
And much he wish'd, yet fear'd, to try  
The long-forgotten melody.  
Amid the strings his fingers stray'd,  
And an uncertain warbling made,  
And oft he shook his hoary head.  
But when he caught the measure wild,  
The old man raised his face, and smiled ;  
And lighten'd up his faded eye,  
With all a poet's ecstasy !  
In varying cadence, soft or strong,  
He swept the sounding chords along :  
The present scene, the future lot,  
His toils, his wants, were all forgot :  
Cold diffidence, and age's frost,  
In the full tide of song were lost ;  
Each blank, in faithless memory void,  
The poet's glowing thought supplied :  
And, while his harp responsive rung,  
'T was thus the LATEST MINSTREL sung.

## CANTO FIRST.

## I.

THE feast was over in Branksome tower,  
 And the Ladye had gone to her secret bower ;  
 Her bower that was guarded by word and by spell,  
 Deadly to hear, and deadly to tell —  
 Jesu Maria, shield us well !  
 No living wight, save the Ladye alone,  
 Had dared to cross the threshold stone.

## II.

The tables were drawn, it was idlesse all ;  
 Knight, and page, and household squire,  
 Loiter'd through the lofty hall,  
 Or crowded round the ample fire :  
 The stag-hounds, weary with the chase,  
 Lay stretch'd upon the rushy floor,  
 And urged, in dreams, the forest-race,  
 From Teviot-stone to Eskdale-moor.

## III.

Nine-and-twenty knights of fame  
 Hung their shields in Branksome Hall ;  
 Nine-and-twenty squires of name  
 Brought them their steeds to bower from stall ;  
 Nine-and-twenty yeomen tall  
 Waited, duteous, on them all :  
 They were all knights of metal true,  
 Kinsmen to the bold Buccleugh.

## IV.

Ten of them were sheathed in steel,  
 With belted sword, and spur on heel :  
 They quitted not their harness bright,  
 Neither by day nor yet by night :  
 They lay down to rest,  
 With corslet laced,  
 Pillow'd on buckler cold and hard ;

They carv'd at the meal  
With gloves of steel,  
And they drank the red wine through  
The helmet barr'd.

V.

Ten squires, ten yeomen, mail-clad men,  
Waited the beck of the warders ten ;  
Thirty steeds, both fleet and wight,  
Stood saddled in stable day and night, —  
Barbed with frontlet of steel, I trow,  
And with Jedwood-axe at saddle-bow ;  
A hundred more fed free in stall : —  
Such was the custom of Branksome Hall.

VI.

Why do these steeds stand ready dight ?  
Why watch these warriors, arm'd, by night ? —  
They watch, to hear the blood-hound baying :  
They watch, to hear the war-horn braying :  
To see St. George's red cross streaming,  
To see the midnight beacon gleaming :  
They watch, against Southern force and guile,  
Lest Scroop, or Howard, or Percy's powers,  
Threaten Branksome's lordly towers,  
From Warkworth, or Naworth, or merry Carlisle.

VII.

Such is the custom of Branksome Hall. —  
Many a valiant knight is here ;  
But he, the chieftain of them all,  
His sword hangs rusting on the wall,  
Beside his broken spear.  
Bards long shall tell,  
How Lord Walter fell !  
When startled burghers fled, afar,  
The furies of the Border war ;  
When the streets of high Dunedin <sup>1</sup>  
Saw lances gleam, and falchions redden,  
And heard the slogan's <sup>2</sup> deadly yell —  
Then the Chief of Branksome fell.

<sup>1</sup> Edinburgh.    <sup>2</sup> The war-cry or gathering word of a Border clan.

## VIII.

Can piety the discord heal,  
     Or stanch the death-feud's enmity?  
 Can Christian lore, can patriot zeal,  
     Can love of blessed charity?  
 No! vainly to each holy shrine,  
     In mutual pilgrimage, they drew;  
 Implored, in vain, the grace divine  
     For chiefs, their own red falchions slew:  
 While Cessford owns the rule of Carr,  
     While Ettrick boasts the line of Scott,  
 The slaughter'd chiefs, the mortal jar,  
 The havoc of the feudal war,  
     Shall never, never be forgot!

## IX.

In sorrow o'er Lord Walter's bier  
     The warlike foresters had bent;  
 And many a flower, and many a tear,  
     Old Teviot's maids and matrons lent:  
 But o'er her warrior's bloody bier  
 The Ladye dropp'd nor flower nor tear!  
 Vengeance, deep-brooding o'er the slain,  
     Had lock'd the source of softer woe;  
 And burning pride, and high disdain,  
     Forbade the rising tear to flow;  
 Until, amid his sorrowing clan,  
     Her son lisp'd from the nurse's knee—  
 "And if I live to be a man,  
     My father's death revenged shall be!"  
 Then fast the mother's tears did seek  
 To dew the infant's kindling cheek.

## X.

All loose her negligent attire,  
     All loose her golden hair,  
 Hung Margaret o'er her slaughter'd sire,  
     And wept in wild despair,  
 But not alone the bitter tear  
     Had filial grief supplied;  
 For hopeless love, and anxious fear,  
     Had lent their mingled tide:

Nor in her mother's alter'd eye  
Dared she to look for sympathy.  
Her lover, 'gainst her father's clan,  
With Carr in arms had stood,  
When Mathouse-burn to Melrose ran  
All purple with their blood ;  
And well she knew, her mother dread,  
Before Lord Cranstoun she should wed,  
Would see her on her dying bed.

XI.

Of noble race the Ladye came,  
Her father was a clerk of fame,  
Of Bethune's line of Picardie :  
He learned the art that none may name,  
In Padua, far beyond the sea.  
Men said, he changed his mortal frame,  
By feat of magic mystery ;  
For when, in studious mood he paced  
St. Andrew's cloister'd hall,  
His form no darkening shadow traced  
Upon the sunny wall !

XII.

And of his skill, as bards avow,  
He taught that Ladye fair,  
Till to her bidding she could bow  
The viewless forms of air.  
And now she sits in secret bower,  
In old Lord David's western tower,  
And listens to a heavy sound,  
That moans the mossy turrets round.  
Is it the roar of Teviot's tide,  
That chafes against the scaur's red side ?  
Is it the wind that swings the oaks ?  
Is it the echo from the rocks ?  
What may it be, the heavy sound,  
That moans old Branksome's turrets round ?

XIII.

At the sullen, moaning sound,  
The ban-dogs bay and howl ;

And, from the turrets round,  
 Loud whoops the startled owl.  
 In the hall, both squire and knight  
 Swore that a storm was near,  
 And looked forth to view the night;  
 But the night was still and clear!

## XIV.

From the sound of Teviot's tide,  
 Chafing with the mountain's side,  
 From the groan of the wind-swung oak,  
 From the sullen echo of the rock,  
 From the voice of the coming storm,  
 The Ladye knew it well!  
 It was the Spirit of the Flood that spoke,  
 And he called on the Spirit of the Fell.

## XV.

## RIVER SPIRIT.

"Sleep'st thou, brother?" —

## MOUNTAIN SPIRIT.

— "Brother, nay —

On my hills the moonbeams play.  
 From Craik-cross to Skelfhill-pen,  
 By every rill, in every glen,  
 Merry elves their morris pacing,  
 To ærial minstrelsy,  
 Emerald rings on brown heath tracing,  
 Trip it deft and merrily.  
 Up, and mark their nimble feet!  
 Up, and list their music sweet!" —

## XVI.

## RIVER SPIRIT.

"Tears of an imprisoned maiden  
 Mix with my polluted stream;  
 Margaret of Branksome, sorrow-laden,  
 Mourns beneath the moon's pale beam.  
 Tell me, thou, who view'st the stars,  
 When shall cease these feudal jars?  
 What shall be the maiden's fate?  
 Who shall be the maiden's mate?" —



## XVII.

## MOUNTAIN SPIRIT.

"Arthur's slow wain his course doth roll,  
 In utter darkness, round the pole;  
 The Northern Bear lowers black and grim;  
 Orion's studded belt is dim;  
 Twinkling faint, and distant far,  
 Shimmers through mist each planet star;  
 Ill may I read their high decree!  
 But no kind influence deign they shower  
 On Teviot's tide, and Branksome's tower,  
 Till pride be quell'd, and love be free."

## XVIII.

The unearthly voices ceast,  
 And the heavy sound was still;  
 It died on the river's breast,  
 It died on the side of the hill.  
 But round Lord David's tower  
 The sound still floated near;  
 For it rung in the Ladye's bower,  
 And it rung in the Ladye's ear.  
 She raised her stately head,  
 And her heart throbb'd high with pride:—  
 "Your mountains shall bend,  
 And your streams ascend,  
 Ere Margaret be our foeman's bride!"

## XIX.

The Ladye sought the lofty hall,  
 Where many a bold retainer lay,  
 And, with jocund din, among them all,  
 Her son pursued his infant play.  
 A fancied moss-trooper, the boy  
 The truncheon of a spear bestrode,  
 And round the hall right merrily,  
 In mimic foray rode.  
 Even bearded knights, in arms grown old,  
 Share in his frolic gambols bore,  
 Albeit their hearts, of rugged mould,  
 Were stubborn as the steel they wore.

For the gray warriors prophesied,  
     How the brave boy, in future war,  
 Should tame the Unicorn's pride,  
     Exalt the Crescent and the Star.

## XX.

The Ladye forgot her purpose high,  
     One moment, and no more ;  
 One moment gazed with a mother's eye,  
     As she paused at the arched door :  
 Then, from amid the armed train,  
 She call'd to her William of Deloraine.

## XXI.

A stark moss-trooping Scott was he,  
 As e'er couch'd Border lance by knee ;  
 Through Solway sands, through Tarras moss,  
 Blindfold, he knew the paths to cross ;  
 By wily turns, by desperate bounds,  
 Had baffled Percy's best blood-hounds ;  
 In Eske or Liddel, fords were none,  
 But he would ride them, one by one ;  
 Alike to him was time or tide,  
 December's snow, or July's pride ;  
 Alike to him was tide or time,  
 Moonless midnight, or matin prime :  
 Steady of heart, and stout of hand,  
 As ever drove prey from Cumberland ;  
 Five times outlawed had he been,  
 By England's King, and Scotland's Queen.

## XXII.

" Sir William of Deloraine, good at need,  
 Mount thee on the wightest steed ;  
 Spare not to spur, nor stint to ride,  
 Until thou come to fair Tweedside ;  
 And in Melrose's holy pile  
 Seek thou the Monk of St. Mary's aisle.  
     Greet the Father well from me ;  
     Say that the fated hour is come,  
 And to-night he shall watch with thee,  
     To win the treasure of the tomb :

For this will be St. Michael's night,  
And, though stars be dim, the moon is bright ;  
And the Cross, of bloody red,  
Will point to the grave of the mighty dead.

XXIII.

"What he gives thee, see thou keep,  
Stay not thou for food or sleep :  
Be it scroll, or be it book,  
Into it, Knight, thou must not look ;  
If thou readest, thou art lorn !  
Better hadst thou ne'er been born !" —

XXIV.

"O swiftly can speed my dapple-grey steed,  
Which drinks of the Teviot clear ;  
Ere break of day," the Warrior 'gan say,  
"Again will I be here :  
And safer by none may thy errand be done,  
Than, noble dame, by me ;  
Letter nor line know I never a one,  
Wer't my neck-verse at Hairibee."

XXV.

Soon in his saddle sate he fast,  
And soon the steep descent he past,  
Soon cross'd the sounding barbican,<sup>1</sup>  
And soon the Teviot side he won.  
Eastward the wooded path he rode,  
Green hazels o'er his basnet nod ;  
He pass'd the Peel<sup>2</sup> of Goldiland,  
And cross'd old Borthwick's roaring strand ;  
Dimly he view'd the Moat-hill's mound,  
Where Druid shades still flitted round ;  
In Hawick twinkled many a light ;  
Behind him soon they set in night ;  
And soon he spurr'd his courser keen  
Beneath the tower of Hazeldean.

XXVI.

The clattering hoofs the watchmen mark : —  
"Stand, ho ! thou courier of the dark." —

<sup>1</sup> *Barbican*, the defence of an outer gate of a feudal castle.

<sup>2</sup> *Peel*, a Border tower.

“ For Branksome, ho ! ” the knight rejoin’d,  
 And left the friendly tower behind.  
 He turn’d him now from Teviotside,  
 And, guided by the tinkling rill,  
 Northward the dark ascent did ride,  
 And gained the moor at Horsliehill ;  
 Broad on the left before him lay,  
 For many a mile the Roman way.<sup>1</sup>

## XXVII.

A moment now he slack’d his speed,  
 A moment breathed his panting steed ;  
 Drew saddle-girth and corslet-band,  
 And loosen’d in the sheath his brand,  
 On Minto-crag the moonbeams glint,  
 Where Barnhill hew’d his bed of flint ;  
 Who flung his outlaw’d limbs to rest,  
 Where falcons hang their giddy nest,  
 Mid cliffs, from whence his eagle eye  
 For many a league his prey could spy ;  
 Cliffs, doubling, on their echoes borne,  
 The terrors of the robber’s horn ;  
 Cliffs, which, for many a later year,  
 The warbling Doric reed shall hear,  
 When some sad swain shall teach the grove,  
 Ambition is no cure for love !

## XXVIII.

Unchallenged, thence pass’d Deloraine,  
 To ancient Riddel’s fair domain,  
 Where Aill, from mountains freed,  
 Down from the lakes did raving come ;  
 Each wave was crested with tawny foam,  
 Like the mane of a chestnut steed.  
 In vain ! no torrent, deep or broad,  
 Might bar the bold moss-trooper’s road.

## XXIX.

At the first plunge the horse sunk low,  
 And the water broke o’er the saddlebow ;

<sup>1</sup> An ancient Roman road, crossing through part of Roxburgh-shire.

Above the foaming tide, I ween,  
 Scarce half the charger's neck was seen ;  
 For he was barded <sup>1</sup> from counter to tail,  
 And the rider was armed complete in mail ;  
 Never heavier man and horse  
 Stemm'd a midnight torrent's force.  
 The warrior's very plume, I say,  
 Was daggled by the dashing spray ;  
 Yet, through good heart, and Our Ladye's grace,  
 At length he gained the landing place.

## XXX.

Now Bowden Moor the march-man won,  
 And sternly shook his plumed head,  
 As glanced his eye o'er Halidon ; <sup>2</sup>  
 For on his soul the slaughter red  
 Of that unhallow'd morn arose,  
 When first the Scott and Carr were foes ;  
 When royal James beheld the fray,  
 Prize to the victor of the day,  
 When Home and Douglas, in the van,  
 Bore down Buccleuch's retiring clan,  
 Till gallant Cessford's heart-blood dear  
 Reek'd on dark Elliot's Border spear.

## XXXI.

In bitter mood he spurred fast,  
 And soon the hated heath was past ;  
 And far beneath, in lustre wan,  
 Old Melros' rose, and fair Tweed ran,  
 Like some tall rock with lichens gray,  
 Seem'd dimly huge, the dark Abbaye.  
 When Hawick he pass'd, had curfew rung,  
 Now midnight lauds <sup>3</sup> were in Melrose sung.  
 The sound, upon the fitful gale,  
 In solemn wise did rise and fail,  
 Like that wild harp, whose magic tone  
 Is waken'd by the winds alone.

<sup>1</sup> *Barded*, or barbed, — applied to a horse accoutred with defensive armor.

<sup>2</sup> An ancient seat of the Kerrs of Cessford, now demolished.

<sup>3</sup> *Lauds*, the midnight service of the Catholic Church.

But when Melrose he reach'd, 'twas silence all ;  
 He meetly stabled his steed in stall,  
 And sought the convent's lonely wall.

---

HERE paused the harp ; and with its swell  
 The Master's fire and courage fell ;  
 Dejectedly, and low, he bow'd,  
 And, gazing timid on the crowd,  
 He seem'd to seek, in every eye,  
 If they approved his minstrelsy ;  
 And, diffident of present praise,  
 Somewhat he spoke of former days,  
 And how old age, and wand'ring long,  
 Had done his hand and harp some wrong.  
 The Duchess and her daughters fair,  
 And every gentle lady there,  
 Each after each, in due degree,  
 Gave praises to his melody ;  
 His hand was true, his voice was clear,  
 And much they longed the rest to hear,  
 Encouraged thus, the Aged Man,  
 After meet rest, again began.

## CANTO SECOND.

### I.

IF thou would'st view fair Melrose aright,  
 Go visit it by the pale moonlight ;  
 For the gay beams of lightsome day,  
 Gild, but to flout, the ruins gray.  
 When the broken arches are black in night,  
 And each shafted oriel glimmers white ;  
 When the cold light's uncertain shower  
 Streams on the ruined central tower ;  
 When buttress and buttress, alternately,  
 Seem framed of ebon and ivory ;  
 When silver edges the imagery,  
 And the scrolls that teach thee to live and die ;  
 When distant Tweed is heard to rave,  
 And the owlet to hoot o'er the dead man's grave,

Then go — but go alone the while —  
 Then view St. David's ruin'd pile ;  
 And, home returning, soothly swear,  
 Was never scene so sad and fair !

## II.

Short halt did Deloraine make there :  
 Little reck'd he of the scene so fair ;  
 With dagger's hilt, on the wicket strong,  
 He struck full loud, and struck full long,  
 The porter hurried to the gate —  
 " Who knocks so loud, and knocks so late ? " —  
 " From Branksome I," the warrior cried ;  
 And strait the wicket open'd wide :  
 For Branksome's Chiefs had in battle stood,  
 To fence the rights of fair Melrose ;  
 And lands and livings, many a rood,  
 Had gifted the shrine for their souls' repose.

## III.

Bold Deloraine his errand said ;  
 The porter bent his humble head ;  
 With torch in hand, and feet unshod,  
 And noiseless step, the path he trod ;  
 The arched cloister, far and wide,  
 Rang to the warrior's clanking stride,  
 Till, stooping low his lofty crest,  
 He enter'd the cell of the ancient priest,  
 And lifted his barred aventayle,<sup>1</sup>  
 To hail the Monk of St. Mary's aisle.

## IV.

" The Ladye of Branksome greets thee by me ;  
 Says, that the fated hour is come,  
 And that to-night I shall watch with thee,  
 To win the treasure of the tomb." —  
 From sackcloth couch the monk arose,  
 With toil his stiffen'd limbs he rear'd ;  
 A hundred years had flung their snows  
 On his thin locks and floating beard.

<sup>1</sup> *Aventayle*, visor of the helmet.



## V.

And strangely on the knight look'd he,  
 And his blue eyes gleam'd wild and wide ;  
 "And darest thou, Warrior! seek to see  
 What heaven and hell alike would hide ?  
 My breast, in belt of iron pent,  
 With shirt of hair and scourge of thorn ;  
 For threescore years, in penance spent,  
 My knees those flinty stones have worn ;  
 Yet all too little to atone  
 For knowing what should ne'er be known.  
 Would'st thou thy every future year  
 In ceaseless prayer and penance dree,  
 Yet wait thy latter end with fear —  
 Then daring Warrior, follow me!" —

## VI.

"Penance, father, will I none ;  
 Prayer know I hardly one ;  
 For mass or prayer can I rarely tarry,  
 Save to patter an Ave Mary,  
 When I ride on a Border foray.  
 Other prayer can I none ;  
 So speed me my errand, and let me be gone." —

## VII.

Again on the Knight look'd the Churchman old,  
 And again he sighed heavily ;  
 For he had himself been a warrior bold,  
 And fought in Spain and Italy,  
 And he thought on the days that were long since by,  
 When his limbs were strong, and his courage was  
 high : —  
 Now, slow and faint, he led the way,  
 Where, cloister'd round, the garden lay ;  
 The pillar'd arches were over their head,  
 And beneath their feet were the bones of the dead.

## VIII.

Spreading herbs, and flowerets bright,  
 Glisten'd with the dew of night ;

Nor herb, nor floweret, glisten'd there,  
 But was carved in the cloister-arches as fair.  
     The Monk gazed long on the lovely moon,  
     Then into the night he looked forth ;  
 And red and bright the streamers light  
     Were dancing in the glowing north.  
 So he had seen, in fair Castile,  
     The youth in glittering squadrons start ;  
 Sudden the flying jennet wheel,  
     And hurl the unexpected dart.  
 He knew, by the streamers that shot so bright,  
 That spirits were riding the northern light.

## IX.

By a steel-clenched postern door,  
 They enter'd now the chancel tall ;  
 The darken'd roof rose high aloof  
     On pillars lofty and light and small :  
 The key-stone, that lock'd each ribbed aisle,  
 Was a fleur-de-lys, or a quatre-feuille ;  
 The corbells<sup>1</sup> were carved grotesque and grim ;  
 And the pillars, with cluster'd shafts so trim,  
 With base and with capital flourish'd around,  
 Seem'd bundles of lances which garlands had bound.

## X.

Full many a scutcheon and banner riven,  
 Shook to the cold night-wind of heaven,  
     Around the screened altar's pale ;  
 And there the dying lamps did burn,  
 Before thy low and lonely urn,  
 O gallant Chief of Otterburne !  
     And thine, dark Knight of Liddesdale !  
 O fading honors of the dead !  
 O high ambition, lowly laid !

## XI.

The moon on the east oriel shone  
 Through slender shafts of shapely stone,  
     By foliated tracery combined ;

<sup>1</sup> *Corbells*, the projections from which the arches spring, usually cut in a fantastic face or mask.

Thou would'st have thought some fairy's hand  
 'Twixt poplars straight the ozier wand,  
     In many a freakish knot, had twined ;  
 Then framed a spell, when the work was done,  
 And changed the willow-wreaths to stone.  
 The silver light, so pale and faint,  
 Show'd many a prophet, and many a saint,  
     Whose image on the glass was dyed ;  
 Full in the midst, his Cross of Red  
 Triumphant Michael brandished,  
     And trampled the Apostate's pride.  
 The moonbeam kiss'd the holy pane,  
 And threw on the pavement a bloody stain.

## XII.

They sate them down on a marble stone,  
     (A Scottish monarch slept below ;)  
 Thus spoke the Monk, in solemn tone : —  
     "I was not always a man of woe ;  
 For Paynim countries I have trod,  
 And fought beneath the Cross of God :  
 Now, strange to my eyes thine arms appear,  
 And their iron clang sounds strange to my ear.

## XIII.

"In these far climes it was my lot  
 To meet the wondrous Michael Scott ;  
     A Wizard, of such dreaded fame,  
 That when, in Salamanca's cave,  
 Him listed his magic wand to wave,  
     The bells would ring in Notre Dame !  
 Some of his skill he taught to me ;  
 And, Warrior, I could say to thee  
 The words that cleft Eildon hills in three,  
     And bridled the Tweed with a curb of stone.  
 But to speak them were a deadly sin ;  
 And for having but thought them my heart within,  
     A treble penance must be done.

## XIV.

"When Michael lay on his dying bed,  
 His conscience was awakened :

He bethought him of his sinful deed,  
And he gave me a sign to come with speed,  
I was in Spain when the morning rose,  
But I stood by his bed ere evening close.  
The words may not again be said,  
That he spoke to me, on death-bed laid ;  
They would rend this Abbaye's massy nave,  
And pile it in heaps above his grave.

XV.

" I swore to bury his Mighty Book,  
That never mortal might therein look :  
And never to tell where it was hid,  
Save at his Chief of Branksome's need :  
And when that need was past and o'er,  
Again the volume to restore.  
I buried him on St. Michael's night,  
When the bell toll'd one, and the moon was bright,  
And I dug his chamber among the dead,  
When the floor of the chancel was stained red,  
That his patron's cross might over him wave,  
And scare the fiends from the Wizard's grave.

XVI.

" It was a night of woe and dread,  
When Michael in the tomb I laid !  
Strange sounds along the chancel pass'd,  
The banners waved without a blast," —  
— Still spoke the Monk, when the bell toll'd one ! —  
I tell you, that a braver man  
Than William of Deloraine, good at need,  
Against a foe ne'er spurr'd a steed ;  
Yet somewhat was he chill'd with dread,  
And his hair did bristle upon his head.

XVII.

" Lo, Warrior ! now the Cross of Red  
Points to the grave of the mighty dead ;  
Within it burns a wondrous light,  
To chase the spirits that love the night.  
That lamp shall burn unquenchably,  
Until the eternal doom shall be." —

Slow moved the Monk to the broad flagstone,  
 Which the bloody Cross was traced upon :  
 He pointed to a secret nook ;  
 An iron bar the Warrior took ;  
 And the Monk made a sign with his wither'd hand,  
 The grave's huge portal to expand.

## XVIII.

With beating heart to the task he went ;  
 His sinewy frame o'er the gravestone bent ;  
 With bar of iron heaved amain,  
 Till the toil-drops fell from his brows, like rain.  
 It was by dint of passing strength,  
 That he moved the massy stone at length.  
 I would you had been there, to see  
 How the light broke forth so gloriously,  
 Stream'd upward to the chancel roof,  
 And through the galleries far aloof !  
 No earthly flame blazed e'er so bright :  
 It shone like heaven's own blessed light,  
     And, issuing from the tomb,  
 Show'd the Monk's cowl, and visage pale,  
 Danced on the dark-brow'd Warrior's mail.  
     And kiss'd his waving plume.

## XIX.

Before their eyes the Wizard lay,  
 As if he had not been dead a day.  
 His hoary beard in silver roll'd,  
 He seem'd some seventy winters old ;  
     A palmer's amice wrapp'd him round,  
     With a wrought Spanish baldric bound,  
     Like a pilgrim from beyond the sea :  
     His left hand held his Book of Might ;  
     A silver cross was in his right ;  
     The lamp was placed beside his knee :  
 High and majestic was his look,  
 At which the fellest fiends had shook,  
 And all unruffled was his face :  
 They trusted his soul had gotten grace.

## XX.

Often had William of Deloraine  
 Rode through the battle's bloody plain,

And trampled down the warriors slain,  
 And neither known remorse nor awe ;  
 Yet now remorse and awe he own'd ;  
 His breath came thick, his head swam round,  
 When this strange scene of death he saw.  
 Bewilder'd and unnerv'd he stood,  
 And the priest pray'd fervently and loud :  
 With eyes averted prayed he ;  
 He might not endure the sight to see,  
 Of the man he had loved so brotherly.

## XXI.

And when the priest his death-prayer had pray'd,  
 Thus unto Deloraine he said : —  
 “ Now, speed thee what thou hast to do,  
 Or, Warrior, we may dearly rue ;  
 For those, thou mayst not look upon,  
 Are gathering fast round the yawning stone ! ”  
 Then Deloraine, in terror, took  
 From the cold hand the Mighty Book,  
 With iron clasp'd, and with iron bound :  
 He thought, as he took it, the dead man frown'd ;  
 But the glare of the sepulchral light,  
 Perchance had dazzled the warrior's sight.

## XXII.

When the huge stone sunk o'er the tomb,  
 The night return'd in double gloom :  
 For the moon had gone down, and the stars were few ;  
 And, as the Knight and Priest withdrew,  
 With wavering steps and dizzy brain,  
 They hardly might the postern gain.  
 'Tis said, as through the aisles they pass'd,  
 They heard strange noises on the blast ;  
 And through the cloister-galleries small,  
 Which at mid-height thread the chancel wall,  
 Loud sobs, and laughter louder, ran,  
 And voices unlike the voice of man ;  
 As if the fiends kept holiday,  
 Because these spells were brought to day.  
 I cannot tell how the truth may be ;  
 I say the tale as 'twas said to me.



## XXIII.

" Now, hie thee hence," the Father said,  
 " And when we are on death-bed laid,  
 O may our dear Ladye, and sweet St. John,  
 Forgive our souls for the deed we have done ! "  
 The Monk return'd him to his cell,  
 And many a prayer and penance sped ;  
 When the convent met at the noontide bell —  
 The Monk of St. Mary's aisle was dead !  
 Before the cross was the body laid,  
 With hands clasp'd fast, as if still he pray'd.

## XXIV.

The Knight breathed free in the morning wind,  
 And strove his hardihood to find :  
 He was glad when he pass'd the tombstones gray,  
 Which girdle round the fair Abbaye ;  
 For the mystic Book, to his bosom prest,  
 Felt like a load upon his breast ;  
 And his joints, with nerves of iron twin'd,  
 Shook, like the aspen leaves in wind.  
 Full fain was he when the dawn of day,  
 Began to brighten Cheviot gray ;  
 He joy'd to see the cheerful light,  
 And he said Ave Mary, as well as he might.

## XXV.

The sun had brighten'd Cheviot gray,  
 The sun had brighten'd the Carter's<sup>1</sup> side ;  
 And soon beneath the rising day  
 Smiled Branksome towers and Teviot's tide.  
 The wild birds told their warbling tale,  
 And waken'd every flower that blows ;  
 And peeped forth the violet pale,  
 And spread her breast the mountain rose.  
 And lovelier than the rose so red,  
 Yet paler than the violet pale,  
 She early left her sleepless bed,  
 The fairest maid of Teviotdale.

<sup>1</sup> A mountain on the Border of England, above Jedburgh.

XXVI.

Why does fair Margaret so early awake,  
And don her kirtle so hastily;  
And the silken knots, which in hurry she would make,  
Why tremble her slender fingers to tie;  
Why does she stop, and look often around,  
As she glides down the secret stair;  
And why does she pat the shaggy blood-hound,  
As she rouses him up from his lair;  
And, though she passes the postern alone,  
Why is not the watchman's bugle blown?

XXVII.

The Ladye steps in doubt and dread,  
Lest her watchful mother hear her tread;  
The Ladye caresses the rough blood-hound,  
Lest his voice should waken the castle round;  
The watchman's bugle is not blown,  
For he was her foster-father's son;  
And she glides through the greenwood at dawn of light,  
To meet Baron Henry, her own true knight.

XXVIII.

The Knight and Ladye fair are met,  
And under the hawthorn's boughs are set.  
A fairer pair were never seen  
To meet beneath the hawthorn green.  
He was stately, and young, and tall;  
Dreaded in battle, and loved in hall:  
And she, when love, scarce told, scarce hid,  
Lent to her cheek a livelier red;  
When the half sigh her swelling breast  
Against the silken ribbon prest;  
When her blue eyes their secret told,  
Though shaded by her locks of gold —  
Where would you find the peerless fair,  
With Margaret of Branksome might compare!

XXIX.

And now, fair dames, methinks I see  
You listen to my minstrelsy;

Your waving locks ye backward throw,  
 And sidelong bend your necks of snow :  
 Ye ween to hear a melting tale,  
 Of two true lovers in a dale ;  
     And how the Knight, with tender fire,  
     To paint his faithful passion strove ;  
     Swore he might at her feet expire,  
     But never, never cease to love ;  
 And how she blush'd and how she sigh'd,  
 And, half consenting, half denied,  
 And said that she would die a maid ; —  
 Yet, might the bloody feud be stay'd  
 Henry of Cranstoun, and only he,  
 Margaret of Branksome's choice should be.

## XXX.

Alas ! fair dames, your hopes are vain !  
 My harp has lost the enchanting strain ;  
     Its lightness would my age reprove :  
 My hairs are gray, my limbs are old,  
 My heart is dead, my veins are cold :  
     I may not, must not, sing of love.

## XXXI.

Beneath an oak, moss'd o'er by eld,  
 The Baron's Dwarf his courser held,  
     And held his crested helm and spear :  
 That Dwarf was scarce an earthly man,  
 If the tales were true that of him ran  
     Through all the Border, far and near.  
 'Twas said, when the Baron a-hunting rode  
 Through Reedsdale's glens, but rarely trode,  
 He heard a voice cry, "Lost ! lost ! lost !" —  
 And, like tennis-ball by racket toss'd,  
     A leap, of thirty feet and three,  
 Made from the gorse this elfin shape,  
 Distorted like some dwarfish ape,  
     And lighted at Lord Cranstoun's knee.  
 Lord Cranstoun was some whit dismay'd ;  
 'Tis said that five good miles he rade,  
     To rid him of his company ;  
 But where he rode one mile, the Dwarf ran four,  
 And the Dwarf was first at the castle door.

XXXII.

Use lessens marvel, it is said :  
This elvish Dwarf with the Baron staid :  
Little he ate, and less he spoke,  
Nor mingled with the menial flock :  
And oft apart his arms he toss'd,  
And often mutter'd "Lost ! lost ! lost !"

He was waspish, arch, and litherlie,  
But well Lord Cranstoun served he :  
And he of his service was full fain ;  
For once he had been ta'en or slain,  
An it had not been for his ministry.  
All between Home and Hermitage,  
Talk'd of Lord Cranstoun's Goblin-Page.

XXXIII.

For the Baron went on pilgrimage,  
And took with him this elvish Page,  
To Mary's Chapel of the Lowes :  
For there, beside our Ladye's lake,  
An offering he had sworn to make,  
And he would pay his vows.

But the Ladye of Branksome gather'd a band  
Of the best that would ride at her command :

The trysting-place was Newark Lee.  
Wat of Harden came thither amain,  
And thither came John of Thirlestane,  
And thither came William of Deloraine ;

They were three hundred spears and three.  
Through Douglas-burn, up Yarrow stream,  
Their horses prance, their lances gleam.  
They came to St. Mary's lake ere day ;  
But the chapel was void, and the Baron away.  
They burn'd the chapel for very rage,  
And cursed Lord Cranstoun's Goblin-Page.

XXXIV.

And now, in Branksome's good greenwood,  
As under the aged oak he stood,  
The Baron's courser pricks his ears,  
As if a distant noise he hears.  
The Dwarf waves his long lean arm on high,

And signs to the lovers to part and fly :  
 No time was then to vow or sigh.  
 Fair Margaret through the hazel-grove,  
 Flew like the startled cushat-dove : <sup>1</sup>  
 The Dwarf the stirrup held and rein ;  
 Vaulted the Knight on his steed amain,  
 And, pondering deep that morning's scene,  
 Rode eastward through the hawthorn's green.

---

WHILE thus he pour'd the lengthen'd tale,  
 The Minstrel's voice began to fail :  
 Full slyly smiled the observant page,  
 And gave the wither'd hand of age  
 A goblet, crown'd with mighty wine,  
 The blood of Velez' scorched vine.  
 He raised the silver cup on high,  
 And, while the big drop fill'd his eye,  
 Pray'd God to bless the Duchess long,  
 And all who cheer'd a son of song.  
 The attending maidens smiled to see  
 How long, how deep, how zealously,  
 The precious juice the Minstrel quaff'd ;  
 And he, embolden'd by the draught,  
 Look'd gaily back to them, and laugh'd.  
 The cordial nectar of the bowl  
 Swell'd his old veins, and cheer'd his soul ;  
 A lighter, livelier prelude ran,  
 Ere thus his tale again began.

### CANTO THIRD.

#### I.

AND said I that my limbs were old,  
 And said I that my blood was cold,  
 And that my kindly fire was fled,  
 And my poor wither'd heart was dead,  
 And that I might not sing of love ? —

<sup>1</sup> Wood-pigeon.

How could I, to the dearest theme  
That ever warm'd a minstrel's dream,  
So foul, so false a recreant prove !  
How could I name love's very name,  
Nor wake my heart to notes of flame !

II.

In peace, Love tunes the shepherd's reed ;  
In war, he mounts the warrior's steed ;  
In halls, in gay attire is seen ;  
In hamlets, dances on the green.  
Love rules the court, the camp, the grove,  
And men below, and saints above ;  
For love is heaven, and heaven is love.

III.

So thought Lord Cranstoun, as I ween,  
While, pondering deep the tender scene,  
He rode through Branksome's hawthorn green.  
But the Page shouted wild and shrill,  
And scarce his helmet could he don,  
When downward from the shady hill  
A stately knight came pricking on.  
That warrior's steed, so dapple-grey,  
Was dark with sweat, and splash'd with clay ;  
His armor red with many a stain :  
He seem'd in such a weary plight,  
As if he had ridden the live-long night ;  
For it was William of Deloraine.

IV.

But no whit weary did he seem,  
When, dancing in the sunny beam,  
He mark'd the crane on the Baron's crest ;<sup>1</sup>  
For his ready spear was in his rest.  
Few were the words, and stern and high,  
That marked the foemen's feudal hate ;  
For question fierce, and proud reply,  
Gave signal soon of dire debate.

<sup>1</sup> The crest of the Cranstouns, in allusion to their name, is a crane dormant, holding a stone in his foot, with an emphatic Border motto : *Thou shalt want ere I want.*



Their very coursers seem'd to know  
 That each was other's mortal foe,  
 And snorted fire, when wheel'd around,  
 To give each knight his vantage-ground.

## V.

In rapid round the Baron bent ;  
 He sigh'd a sigh, and pray'd a prayer ;  
 The prayer was to his patron saint,  
 The sigh was to his ladye fair.  
 Stout Deloraine nor sighed nor pray'd,  
 Nor saint, nor ladye, call'd to aid ;  
 But he stoop'd his head, and couch'd his spear,  
 And spurr'd his steed to full career.  
 The meeting of these champions proud  
 Seem'd like the bursting thunder-cloud.

## VI.

Stern was the dint the Borderer lent !  
 The stately Baron backwards bent ;  
 Bent backwards to his horse's tail,  
 And his plumes went scattering on the gale :  
 The tough ash spear, so stout and true,  
 Into a thousand flinders flew.  
 But Cranstoun's lance, of more avail,  
 Pierced through, like silk, the Borderer's mail ;  
 Through shield, and jack, and acton, past,  
 Deep in his bosom broke at last. —  
 Still sate the warrior, saddle-fast,  
 Till, stumbling in the mortal shock,  
 Down went the steed, the girthing broke,  
 Hurl'd on a heap lay man and horse.  
 The Baron onward pass'd his course ;  
 Nor knew — so giddy roll'd his brain —  
 His foe lay stretched upon the plain.

## VII.

But when he rein'd his courser round,  
 And saw his foeman on the ground  
     Lie senseless as the bloody clay,  
 He bade his page to stanch the wound,  
     And there beside the warrior stay,

And tend him in his doubtful state,  
And lead him to Branksome castle-gate :  
His noble mind was inly moved  
For the kinsman of the maid he loved.  
“ This shalt thou do without delay :  
No longer here myself may stay ;  
Unless the swifter I speed away,  
Short shrift will be at my dying day.”

VIII.

Away in speed Lord Cranstoun rode ;  
The Goblin-Page behind abode ;  
His lord's command he ne'er withstood,  
Though small his pleasure to do good.  
As the corslet off he took,  
The dwarf espied the Mighty Book !  
Much he marvell'd a knight of pride,  
Like a book-bosom'd priest should ride :  
He thought not to search or stanch the wound,  
Until the secret he had found.

IX.

The iron band, the iron clasp,  
Resisted long the elfin grasp :  
For when the first he had undone,  
It closed as he the next begun.  
Those iron clasps, that iron band,  
Would not yield to unchristen'd hand,  
Till he smear'd the cover o'er  
With the Borderer's curdled gore ;  
A moment then the volume spread,  
And one short spell therein he read,  
It had much of glamor<sup>1</sup> might,  
Could make a ladye seem a knight ;  
The cobwebs on a dungeon wall  
Seem tapestry in lordly hall ;  
A nut-shell seem a gilded barge,  
A sheeling<sup>2</sup> seem a palace large,  
And youth seem age, and age seem youth —  
All was delusion, nought was truth.

<sup>1</sup> Magical delusion.

<sup>2</sup> A shepherd's hut.

## X.

He had not read another spell,  
 When on his cheek a buffet fell,  
 So fierce, it stretch'd him on the plain,  
 Beside the wounded Deloraine.  
 From the ground he rose dismay'd,  
 And shook his huge and matted head ;  
 One word he mutter'd, and no more,  
 " Man of age, thou smitest sore ! " —  
 No more the Elfin Page durst try  
 Into the wondrous Book to pry ;  
 The clasps, though smear'd with Christian gore,  
 Shut faster than they were before.  
 He hid it underneath his cloak. —  
 Now, if you ask who gave the stroke,  
 I cannot tell, so mot I thrive ;  
 It was not given by man alive.

## XI.

Unwillingly himself he address'd  
 To do his master's high behest :  
 He lifted up the living corse,  
 And laid it on the weary horse ;  
 He led him into Branksome Hall,  
 Before the beards of the warders all ;  
 And each did after swear and say,  
 There only pass'd a wain of hay.  
 He took him to Lord David's tower,  
 Even to the Ladye's secret bower ;  
 And, but that stronger spells were spread,  
 And the door might not be opened,  
 He had laid him on her very bed.  
 Whate'er he did of gramarye,<sup>1</sup>  
 Was always done maliciously ;  
 He flung the warrior on the ground,  
 And the blood well'd freshly from the wound.

## XII.

As he repass'd the outer court,  
 He spied the fair young child at sport :

<sup>1</sup> Magic.

He thought to train him to the wood ;  
 For, at a word, be it understood,  
 He was always for ill, and never for good.  
 Seem'd to the boy, some comrade gay  
 Led him forth to the woods to play ;  
 On the drawbridge the warders stout  
 Saw a terrier and lurcher passing out.

## XIII.

He led the boy o'er bank and fell,  
 Until they came to a woodland brook ;  
 The running stream dissolved the spell,  
 And his own elvish shape he took.  
 Could he have had his pleasure vilde,  
 He had crippled the joints of the noble child ;  
 Or, with his fingers long and lean,  
 Had strangled him in fiendish spleen :  
 But his awful mother he had in dread,  
 And also his power was limited ;  
 So he but scowl'd on the startled child,  
 And darted through the forest wild ;  
 The woodland brook he bounding cross'd,  
 And laugh'd, and shouted, " Lost ! lost ! lost ! " —

## XIV.

Full sore amaz'd at the wondrous change,  
 And frighten'd as a child might be,  
 At the wild yell and visage strange,  
 And the dark words of gramarye,  
 The child, amidst the forest bower ;  
 Stood rooted like a lily flower ;  
 And when at length, with trembling pace,  
 He sought to find where Branksome lay,  
 He fear'd to see that grisly face,  
 Glare from some thicket on his way.  
 Thus, starting oft, he journey'd on,  
 And deeper in the wood is gone, —  
 For aye the more he sought his way.  
 The farther still he went astray, —  
 Until he heard the mountains round  
 Ring to the baying of a hound.

## XV.

And hark ! and hark ! the deep-mouth'd bark  
     Comes nigher still, and nigher :  
 Burst on the path a dark blood-hound,  
 His tawny muzzle track'd the ground,  
     And his red eye shot fire.  
 Soon as the wilder'd child saw he,  
 He flew at him right furiouslie.  
 I ween you would have seen with joy  
 The bearing of the gallant boy,  
 When, worthy of his noble sire,  
 His wet cheek glow'd 'twixt fear and ire !  
 He faced the blood-hound manfully,  
 And held his little bat on high ;  
 So fierce he struck, the dog, afraid,  
 At cautious distance hoarsely bay'd,  
     But still in act to spring ;  
 When dash'd an archer through the glade,  
 And when he saw the hound was stay'd,  
     He drew his tough bow-string ;  
 But a rough voice cried, " Shoot not, hoy !  
 Ho ! shoot not, Edward — 'Tis a boy !

## XVI.

The speaker issued from the wood,  
 And check'd his fellow's surly mood,  
     And quell'd the ban-dog's ire :  
 He was an English yeoman good,  
     And born in Lancashire.  
 Well could he hit a fallow-deer  
     Five hundred feet him fro ;  
 With hand more true, and eye more clear,  
     No archer bended bow.  
 His coal-black hair, shorn round and close,  
     Set off his sun-burn'd face :  
 Old England's sign, St. George's cross,  
     His barret-cap did grace ;  
 His bugle-horn hung by his side,  
     All in a wolf-skin baldric tied ;  
 And his short falchion, sharp and clear,  
 Had pierced the throat of many a deer.

XVII.

His kirtle, made of forest green,  
Reach'd scantily to his knee ;  
And, at his belt, of arrows keen  
A furbish'd sheaf bore he ;  
His buckler, scarce in breadth a span,  
No larger fence had he ;  
He never counted him a man,  
Would strike below the knee :  
His slacken'd bow was in his hand,  
And the leash, that was his blood-hound's band.

XVIII.

He would not do the fair child harm,  
But held him with his powerful arm,  
That he might neither fight nor flee ;  
For when the Red-Cross spied he,  
The boy strove long and violently.  
" Now, by St. George," the archer cries,  
" Edward, methinks we have a prize !  
This boy's fair face, and courage free,  
Show he is come of high degree." —

XIX.

" Yes ! I am come of high degree,  
For I am the heir of bold Buccleuch ;  
And, if thou dost not set me free,  
False Southron, thou shalt dearly rue !  
For Walter of Harden shall come with speed,  
And William of Deloraine, good at need,  
And every Scott, from Esk to Tweed ;  
And, if thou dost not let me go,  
Despite thy arrows, and thy bow,  
I'll have thee hang'd to feed the crow ! " —

XX.

" Gramercy, for thy good-will, fair boy !  
My mind was never set so high ;  
But if thou art chief of such a clan,  
And art the son of such a man,  
And ever comest to thy command,  
Our wardens had need to keep good order ;



My bow of yew to a hazel wand,  
 Thou'lt make them work upon the Border.  
 Meantime, be pleasèd to come with me,  
 For good Lord Dacre shalt thou see;  
 I think our work is well begun,  
 When we have taken thy father's son."

## XXI.

Although the child was led away,  
 In Branksome still he seem'd to stay,  
 For so the Dwarf his part did play;  
 And, in the shape of that young boy,  
 He wrought the castle much annoy.  
 The comrades of the young Buccleuch  
 He pinch'd, and beat, and overthrew;  
 Nay, some of them he well-nigh slew.  
 He tore Dame Maudlin's silken tire,  
 And, as Sym Hall stood by the fire,  
 He lighted the match of his bandelier,<sup>1</sup>  
 And wofully scorch'd the hackbuteer.<sup>2</sup>  
 It may be hardly thought or said,  
 The mischief that the urchin made,  
 Till many of the castle guess'd,  
 That the young Baron was possess'd!

## XXII.

Well I ween the charm he held  
 The noble Ladye had soon dispell'd;  
 But she was deeply busied then  
 To tend the wounded Deloraine.  
 Much she wonder'd to find him lie,  
 On the stone threshold stretch'd along;  
 She thought some spirit of the sky  
 Had done the bold moss-trooper wrong,  
 Because, despite her precept dread,  
 Perchance he in the Book had read;  
 But the broken lance in his bosom stood,  
 And it was earthly steel and wood.

<sup>1</sup> *Bandelier*, belt for carrying ammunition.

<sup>2</sup> *Hackbuteer*, musketeer.

## XXIII.

She drew the splinter from the wound,  
 And with a charm she stanch'd the blood ;  
 She bade the gash be cleansed and bound :  
 No longer by his couch she stood ;  
 But she has ta'en the broken lance,  
 And wash'd it from the clotted gore,  
 And salved the splinter o'er and o'er.  
 William of Deloraine, in trance,  
 Whene'er she turned it round and round,  
 Twisted as if she gall'd his wound.  
 Then to her maidens she did say,  
 That he should be whole man and sound,  
 Within the course of a night and day.  
 Full long she toil'd ; for she did rue  
 Mishap to friend so stout and true.

## XXIV.

So pass'd the day — the evening fell,  
 'Twas near the time of curfew bell ;  
 The air was mild, the wind was calm,  
 The stream was smooth, the dew was balm ;  
 E'en the rude watchman, on the tower,  
 Enjoy'd and bless'd the lovely hour.  
 Far more fair Margaret loved and bless'd  
 The hour of silence and of rest.  
 On the high turret sitting lone,  
 She waked at times the lute's soft tone ;  
 Touch'd a wild note, and all between  
 Thought of the bower of hawthorns green.  
 Her golden hair stream'd free from band,  
 Her fair cheek rested on her hand,  
 Her blue eyes sought the west afar,  
 For lovers love the western star.

## XXV.

Is yon the star, o'er Penchryst Pen,  
 That rises slowly to her ken,  
 And, spreading broad its wavering light,  
 Shakes its loose tresses on the night ?  
 Is yon red glare the western star ? —  
 Oh ! 'tis the beacon-blaze of war !

Scarce could she draw her tighten'd breath,  
For well she knew the fire of death!

## XXVI.

The Warder view'd it blazing strong,  
And blew his war-note loud and long,  
Till, at the high and haughty sound,  
Rock, wood, and river, rung around.  
The blast alarm'd the festal hall,  
And startled forth the warriors all;  
Far downward, in the castle yard,  
Full many a torch and cresset glared;  
And helms and plumes, confusedly toss'd,  
Were in the blaze half-seen, half-lost;  
And spears in wild disorder shook,  
Like reeds beside a frozen brook.

## XXVII.

The Seneschal, whose silver hair  
Was redden'd by the torches' glare,  
Stood in the midst, with gesture proud,  
And issued forth his mandates loud:—  
"On Penchryst glows a bale of fire,  
And three are kindling on Priestthaughswire:  
Ride out, ride out,  
The foe to scout!  
Mount, mount for Branksome, every man!  
Thou, Todrig, warn the Johnstone clan,  
That ever are true and stout—  
Ye need not send to Liddesdale;  
For when they see the blazing bale,  
Elliot and Armstrongs never fail.—  
Ride, Alton, ride, for death and life!  
And warn the Warder of the strife.  
Young Gilbert, let our beacon blaze,  
Our kin, and clan, and friends, to raise."

## XXVIII.

Fair Margaret, from the turret head,  
Heard, far below, the coursers' tread,  
While loud the harness rung,  
As to their seats, with clamor dread,  
The ready horsemen sprung:

And trampling hoofs, and iron coats,  
 And leaders' voices, mingled notes,  
 And out ! and out !  
 In hasty rout,  
 The horsemen gallop'd forth ;  
 Dispersing to the south to scout,  
 And east, and west, and north,  
 To view their coming enemies,  
 And warn their vassals and allies.

## XXIX.

The ready page, with hurried hand,  
 Awaked the need-fire's <sup>1</sup> slumbering brand,  
 And ruddy blush'd the heaven :  
 For a sheet of flame, from the turret high,  
 Waved like a blood-flag on the sky  
 All flaring and uneven ;  
 And soon a score of fires, I ween,  
 From height, and hill, and cliff, were seen ;  
 Each with warlike tidings fraught ;  
 Each from each the signal caught ;  
 Each after each they glanced to sight,  
 As stars arise upon the night.  
 They gleam'd on many a dusky tarn, <sup>2</sup>  
 Haunted by the lonely earn ; <sup>3</sup>  
 On many a cairn's gray pyramid,  
 Where urns of mighty chiefs lie hid ;  
 Till high Dunedin the blazes saw,  
 From Soltra and Dumpender Law ;  
 And Lothian heard the Regent's order,  
 That all should bowne <sup>4</sup> them for the Border.

## XXX.

The livelong night in Branksome rang  
 The ceaseless sound of steel ;  
 The castle-bell, with backward clang,  
 Sent forth the larum peal :  
 Was frequent heard the heavy jar,  
 Where massy stone and iron bar  
 Were piled on echoing keep and tower,  
 To whelm the foe with deadly shower ;

<sup>1</sup> *Need-fire*, beacon.<sup>2</sup> *Tarn*, a mountain lake.<sup>3</sup> *Earn*, a Scottish eagle.<sup>4</sup> *Bowne*, make ready.

Was frequent heard the changing guard,  
 And watch-word from the sleepless ward;  
 While, wearied by the endless din,  
 Blood-hound and ban-dog yell'd within.

## XXXI.

The noble Dame, amid the broil,  
 Shared the gray Seneschal's high toil,  
 And spoke of danger with a smile;  
     Cheer'd the young knights, and council sage  
 Held with the chiefs of riper age.  
 No tidings of the foe were brought,  
 Nor of his numbers knew they aught,  
 Nor what in time of truce he sought.  
     Some said that there were thousands ten;  
 And others ween'd that it was nought  
     But Leven Clans, or Tynedale men,  
 Who came to gather in black mail;<sup>1</sup>  
 And Liddesdale, with small avail,  
     Might drive them lightly back agen.  
 So pass'd the anxious night away,  
 And welcome was the peep of day.

---

CEASED the high sound — the listening throng  
 Applaud the Master of the Song;  
 And marvel much, in helpless age,  
 So hard should be his pilgrimage.  
 Had he no friend — no daughter dear,  
 His wandering toil to share and cheer;  
 No son to be his father's stay,  
 And guide him on the rugged way?  
 "Ay, once he had — but he was dead!"  
 Upon the harp he stoop'd his head,  
 And busied himself the strings withal  
 To hide the tear, that fain would fall.  
 In solemn measure, soft and slow,  
 Arose a father's notes of woe.

<sup>1</sup> Protection money exacted by freebooters.

CANTO FOURTH.

I.

SWEET Teviot ! on thy silver tide  
The glaring bale-fires blaze no more ;  
No longer steel-clad warriors ride  
Along thy wild and willow'd shore ;  
Where'er thou wind'st, by dale or hill,  
All, all is peaceful, all is still,  
As if thy waves, since Time was born,  
Since first they roll'd upon the Tweed,  
Had only heard the shepherd's reed,  
Nor started at the bugle-horn.

II.

Unlike the tide of human time,  
Which, though it change in ceaseless flow,  
Retains each grief, retains each crime  
Its earliest course was doom'd to know ;  
And, darker as it downward bears,  
Is stained with past and present tears.  
Low as that tide has ebb'd with me,  
It still reflects to Memory's eye  
The hour my brave, my only boy,  
Fell by the side of great Dundee.  
Why, when the volleying musket play'd  
Against the bloody Highland blade,  
Why was not I beside him laid ? —  
Enough — he died the death of fame ;  
Enough — he died with conquering Græme.

III.

Now over Border dale and fell,  
Full wide and far was terror's spread ;  
For pathless marsh, and mountain cell,  
The peasant left his lowly shed.  
The frighten'd flocks and herds were pent  
Beneath the peel's rude battlement ;  
And maids and matrons dropp'd the tear,  
While ready warriors seiz'd the spear.



From Branksome's towers, the watchman's eye  
 Dun wreaths of distant smoke can spy,  
 Which, curling in the rising sun,  
 Show'd southern ravage was begun.

## IV.

Now loud the heedful gate-ward cried —  
 "Prepare ye all for blows and blood !  
 Watt Tinlinn, from the Liddel-side,  
 Comes wading through the flood.  
 Full oft the Tynedale snatchers knock  
 At his lone gate, and prove the lock ;  
 It was but last St. Barnabright  
 They sieged him a whole summer night,  
 But fled at morning ; well they knew  
 In vain he never twang'd the yew.  
 Right sharp has been the evening shower  
 That drove him from his Liddel tower ;  
 And, by my faith," the gate-ward said,  
 "I think 'twill prove a Warden-Raid."<sup>1</sup>

## V.

While thus he spoke, the bold yeoman  
 Entered the echoing barbican.  
 He led a small and shaggy nag,  
 That through a bog, from hag to hag,<sup>2</sup>  
 Could bound like any Billhope stag.  
 It bore his wife and children twain ;  
 A half-clothed serf<sup>3</sup> was all their train ;  
 His wife, stout, ruddy, and dark-brow'd,  
 Of silver brooch and bracelet proud,  
 Laughed to her friends among the crowd.  
 He was of stature passing tall,  
 But sparely formed, and lean withal ;  
 A batter'd morion on his brow ;  
 A leather jack, as fence enow,  
 On his broad shoulders loosely hung ;  
 A Border axe behind was slung ;  
 His spear, six Scottish ells in length,  
 Seemed newly dyed with gore ;

<sup>1</sup> An inroad commanded by the Warden in person.

<sup>2</sup> The broken ground in a bog.

<sup>3</sup> Bondsman.

His shafts and bow, of wondrous strength,  
His hardy partner bore.

VI.

Thus to the Ladye did Tinlinn show  
The tidings of the English foe :—  
“Belted Will Howard is marching here,  
And hot Lord Dacre, with many a spear,  
And all the German hackbut-men,  
Who have long lain at Askerten :  
They cross'd the Liddel at curfew hour,  
And burned my little lonely tower :  
The fiend receive their souls therefor !  
It had not been burnt this year and more.  
Barn-yard and dwelling, blazing bright,  
Served to guide me on my flight ;  
But I was chased the livelong night.  
Black John of Akeshaw, and Fergus Græme,  
Fast upon my traces came,  
Until I turned at Priestthaugh Scrogg,  
And shot their horses in the bog,  
Slew Fergus with my lance outright—  
I had him long at high despite :  
He drove my cows last Fastern's night.”

VII.

Now weary scouts from Liddesdale,  
Fast hurrying in, confirm'd the tale ;  
As far as they could judge by ken,  
Three hours would bring to Teviot's strand  
Three thousand armed Englishmen—  
Meanwhile, full many a warlike band,  
From Teviot, Aill, and Ettrick shade,  
Came in, their Chief's defence to aid.  
There was saddling and mounting in haste,  
There was pricking o'er moor and lea ;  
He that was last at the trysting-place  
Was but lightly held of his gay ladye.

VIII.

From fair St. Mary's silver wave,  
From dreary Gamescleugh's dusky height,

His ready lances Thirlestane brave  
     Array'd beneath a banner bright.  
 The tressured fleur-de-luce he claims,  
 To wreath his shield, since royal James,  
 Encamp'd by Fala's mossy wave,  
 The proud distinction grateful gave,  
     For faith 'mid feudal jars ;  
 What time, save Thirlestane alone,  
 Of Scotland's stubborn barons none  
     Would march to southern wars ;  
 And hence, in fair remembrance worn,  
 Yon sheaf of spears his crest has borne ;  
 Hence his high motto shines reveal'd —  
 "Ready, aye ready," for the field.

## IX.

An aged Knight, to danger steel'd,  
     With many a moss-trooper came on ;  
 And azure in a golden field,  
 The stars and crescent graced his shield,  
     Without the bend of Murdieston.  
 Wide lay his lands round Oakwood tower,  
 And wide round haunted Castle-Ower ;  
 High over Borthwick's mountain flood,  
 His wood-embosom'd mansion stood ;  
 In the dark glen, so deep below,  
 The herds of plunder'd England low ;  
 His bold retainers' daily food,  
 And bought with danger, blows, and blood.  
 Marauding chief ! his sole delight  
 The moonlight raid, the morning fight ;  
 Not even the Flower of Yarrow's charms,  
 In youth, might tame his rage for arms ;  
 And still, in age, he spurn'd at rest,  
 And still his brows the helmet press'd,  
 Albeit the blanched locks below  
 Were white as Dinlay's spotless snow :  
     Five stately warriors drew the sword  
     Before their father's band ;  
 A braver knight than Harden's lord  
     Ne'er belted on a brand.

## X.

Scotts of Eskdale, a stalwart band,  
 Came trooping down the Todshawhill;  
 By the sword they won their land,  
 And by the sword they hold it still.  
 Hearken, Ladye, to the tale,  
 How thy sires won fair Eskdale. —  
 Earl Morton was lord of that valley fair,  
 The Beattisons were his vassals there.  
 The Earl was gentle, and mild of mood,  
 The vassals were warlike, and fierce, and rude;  
 High of heart, and haughty of word,  
 Little they reck'd of a tame liege Lord.  
 The Earl into fair Eskdale came  
 Homage and seigniory to claim:  
 Of Gilbert the Galliard a heriot<sup>1</sup> he sought,  
 Saying, "Give thy best steed, as a vassal ought."  
 — "Dear to me is my bonny white steed,  
 Oft has he help'd me at pinch of need;  
 Lord and Earl though thou be, I trow,  
 I can rein Bucksfoot better than thou." —  
 Word on word gave fuel to fire,  
 Till so highly blazed the Beattison's ire,  
 But that the Earl the flight had ta'en,  
 The vassals there their lord had slain.  
 Sore he plied both whip and spur,  
 As he urged his steed through Eskdale muir;  
 And it fell down a weary weight,  
 Just on the threshold of Branksome gate.

## XI.

The Earl was a wrathful man to see,  
 Full fain avenged would he be.  
 In haste to Branksome's Lord he spoke,  
 Saying, "Take these traitors to thy yoke;  
 For a cast of hawks, and a purse of gold,  
 All Eskdale I'll sell thee, to have and hold:  
 Beshrew thy heart, of the Beattisons' clan  
 If thou leavest on Eske a landed man;

<sup>1</sup> The feudal superior, in certain cases, was entitled to the best horse of the vassal, in name of Heriot, or Herezeld.

But spare Woodkerrick's land alone,  
 For he lent me his horse to escape upon."  
 A glad man then was Branksome bold,  
 Down he flung him the purse of gold;  
 To Eskdale soon he spurr'd amain,  
 And with him five hundred riders has ta'en.  
 He left his merry men in the mist of the hill,  
 And bade them hold them close and still;  
 And alone he wended to the plain,  
 To meet with the Galliard and all his train.  
 To Gilbert the Galliard thus he said:  
 "Know thou me for thy liege-lord and head;  
 Deal not with me as with Morton tame,  
 For Scotts play best at the roughest game.  
 Give me in peace my heriot due,  
 Thy bonny white steed, or thou shalt rue.  
 If my horn I three times wind,  
 Eskdale shall long have the sound in mind." —

## XII.

Loudly the Beattison laugh'd in scorn;  
 "Little care we for thy winded horn.  
 Ne'er shall it be the Galliard's lot  
 To yield his steed to a haughty Scott.  
 Wend thou to Branksome back on foot,  
 With rusty spur and miry boot." —  
 He blew his bugle so loud and hoarse,  
 That the dun-deer started at fair Craik-cross;  
 He blew again so loud and clear,  
 Through the gray mountain-mist there did lances appear;  
 And the third blast rang with such a din,  
 That the echoes answer'd from Pentoun-linn,  
 And all his riders came lightly in.  
 Then had you seen a gallant shock,  
 When saddles were emptied, and lances broke!  
 For each scornful word the Galliard had said,  
 A Beattison on the field was laid.  
 His own good sword the chieftain drew,  
 And he bore the Galliard through and through;  
 Where the Beattisons' blood mix'd with the rill,  
 The Galliard's Haugh men call it still.  
 The Scotts have scatter'd the Beattison's clan,  
 In Eskdale they left but one landed man.

The valley of Eske, from the mouth to the source,  
Was lost and won for that bonny white horse.

XIII.

Whitslade the Hawk, and Headshaw came,  
And warriors more than I may name,  
From Yarrow-cleugh to Hindhaughswair,  
From Woodhouseslie to Chester-glen.

Troop'd man and horse, and bow and spear ;

Their gathering word was Bellenden.

And better hearts o'er Border sod

To siege or rescue never rode.

The Ladye mark'd the aids come in,

And high her heart of pride arose :

She bade her youthful son attend,

That he might know his father's friend,

And learn to face his foes.

“ The boy is ripe to look on war ;

I saw him draw a cross-bow stiff,

And his true arrow struck afar

The raven's nest upon the cliff ;

The red cross, on a southern breast,

Is broader than the raven's nest :

Thou, Whitslade, shalt teach him his weapon to wield,

And o'er him hold his father's shield.” —

XIV.

Well may you think, the wily page

Cared not to face the Ladye sage.

He counterfeited childish fear,

And shriek'd, and shed full many a tear,

And moan'd and plain'd in manner wild.

The attendants to the Ladye told,

Some fairy, sure, had changed the child,

That wont to be so free and bold.

Then wrathful was the noble dame ;

She blush'd blood-red for very shame : —

“ Hence ! ere the clan his faintness view ;

Hence with the weakling to Buccleugh ! —

Watt Tinlinn, thou shalt be his guide

To Rangleburn's lonely side. —

Sure some fell fiend has cursed our line,

That coward should ere be son of mine ! ” —



## XV.

A heavy task Watt Tinlinn had,  
 To guide the counterfeited lad.  
 Soon as the palfrey felt the weight  
 Of that ill-omen'd elfish freight,  
 He bolted, sprung, and rear'd amain,  
 Nor heeded bit, nor curb, nor rein.  
     It cost Watt Tinlinn mickle toil  
     To drive him but a Scottish mile ;  
     But as a shallow brook they cross'd,  
     The elf, amid the running stream,  
 His figure chang'd, like form in dream,  
     And fled, and shouted, " Lost ! lost ! lost ! "  
 Full fast the urchin ran and laugh'd,  
 But faster still a cloth-yard shaft  
 Whistled from startled Tinlinn's yew,  
 And pierced his shoulder through and through.  
 Although the imp might not be slain,  
 And though the wound soon heal'd again,  
 Yet, as he ran, he yell'd for pain ;  
 And Watt of Tinlinn, much aghast,  
 Rode back to Branksome fiery fast.

## XVI.

Soon on the hill's steep verge he stood,  
 That looks o'er Branksome's towers and wood ;  
 And martial murmurs, from below,  
 Proclaim'd the approaching southern foe.  
 Through the dark wood, in mingled tone,  
 Were Border pipes and bugles blown ;  
 The coursers' neighing he could ken,  
 A measured tread of marching men ;  
 While broke at times the solemn hum,  
 The Almayn's sullen kettle-drum ;  
     And banners tall, of crimson sheen,  
     Above the copse appear ;  
     And, glistening through the hawthorns green,  
     Shine helm, and shield, and spear.

## XVII.

Light forayers, first, to view the ground,  
 Spurr'd their fleet coursers loosely round ;

Behind, in close array, and fast,  
 The Kendal archers, all in green,  
 Obedient to the bugle blast,  
 Advancing from the wood were seen.  
 To back and guard the archer band,  
 Lord Dacre's bill-men were at hand :  
 A hardy race, on Irthing bred,  
 With kirtles white, and crosses red,  
 Array'd beneath the banner tall,  
 That stream'd o'er Acre's conquer'd wall ;  
 And minstrels, as they march'd in order,  
 Play'd, "Noble Lord Dacre, he dwells on the Border."

## XVIII.

Behind the English bill and bow,  
 The mercenaries, firm and slow,  
 Moved on to fight, in dark array,  
 By Conrad led of Wolfenstein,  
 Who brought the band from distant Rhine,  
 And sold their blood for foreign pay.  
 The camp their home, their law the sword,  
 They knew no country, own'd no lord :  
 They were not arm'd like England's sons,  
 But bore the levin-darting guns ;  
 Buff coats, all frounced and 'broider'd o'er,  
 And morsing-horns<sup>1</sup> and scarfs they wore ;  
 Each better knee was bared, to aid  
 The warriors in the escalade ;  
 All, as they march'd, in rugged tongue,  
 Songs of Teutonic feuds they sung.

## XIX.

But louder still the clamor grew,  
 And louder still the minstrels blew,  
 When, from beneath the greenwood tree,  
 Rode forth Lord Howard's chivalry ;  
 His men-at-arms, with glaive and spear,  
 Brought up the battle's glittering rear.  
 There many a youthful knight, full keen  
 To gain his spurs, in arms was seen ;  
 With favor in his crest, or glove,  
 Memorial of his ladye-love.

<sup>1</sup> Powder-flasks.

So rode they forth in fair array,  
 Till full their lengthen'd lines display;  
 Then call'd a halt, and made a stand,  
 And cried, "St. George, for merry England!"

## XX.

Now every English eye, intent  
 On Branksome's armed towers was bent;  
 So near they were, that they might know  
 The straining harsh of each cross-bow;  
 On battlement and bartizan  
 Gleam'd axe, and spear, and partisan;  
 Falcon and culver,<sup>1</sup> on each tower,  
 Stood prompt their deadly hail to shower;  
 And flashing armor frequent broke  
 From eddying whirls of sable smoke,  
 Where upon tower and turret head,  
 The seething pitch and molten lead  
 Reek'd, like a witch's cauldron red.  
 While yet they gaze, the bridges fall,  
 The wicket opes, and from the wall  
 Rides forth the hoary Seneschal.

## XXI.

Armed he rode, all save the head,  
 His white beard o'er his breast-plate spread;  
 Unbroke by age, erect his seat,  
 He ruled his eager courser's gait;  
 Forced him, with chasten'd fire, to prance,  
 And high, curveting slow advance:  
 In sign of truce, his better hand  
 Display'd a peelèd willow wand;  
 His squire, attending in the rear,  
 Bore high a gauntlet on a spear.<sup>2</sup>  
 When they espied him riding out,  
 Lord Howard and Lord Dacre stout  
 Sped to the front of their array,  
 To hear what this old knight should say.

<sup>1</sup> Ancient pieces of artillery.

<sup>2</sup> A glove upon a lance was the emblem of faith among the ancient Borderers, who were wont, when any one broke his word, to expose this emblem, and proclaim him a faithless villain at the first Border meeting. This ceremony was much dreaded.

## XXII.

“Ye English warden lords, of you  
 Demands the Ladye of Buccleuch,  
 Why, 'gainst the truce of Border tide,  
 In hostile guise ye dare to ride,  
 With Kendal bow, and Gilsland brand,  
 And all yon mercenary band,  
 Upon the bounds of fair Scotland?  
 My Ladye reads you swith return;  
 And, if but one poor straw you burn,  
 Or do our towers so much molest  
 As scare one swallow from her nest,  
 St. Mary! but we'll light a brand  
 Shall warm your hearths in Cumberland.” —

## XXIII.

A wrathful man was Dacre's lord,  
 But calmer Howard took the word:  
 “May't please thy Dame, Sir Seneschal,  
 To seek the castle's outward wall,  
 Our pursuivant-at-arms shall show  
 Both why we came, and when we go.” —  
 The message sped, the noble Dame  
 To the wall's outward circle came;  
 Each chief around lean'd on his spear,  
 To see the pursuivant appear.  
 All in Lord Howard's livery dress'd,  
 The lion argent deck'd his breast;  
 He led a boy of blooming hue —  
 O sight to meet a mother's view!  
 It was the heir of great Buccleuch.  
 Obeisance meet the herald made,  
 And thus his master's will he said: —

## XXIV.

“It irks, high Dame, my noble Lords,  
 'Gainst ladye fair to draw their swords;  
 But yet they may not tamely see,  
 All through the Western Wardenry,  
 Your law-contemning kinsmen ride,  
 And burn and spoil the Border-side;

And ill beseems your rank and birth  
 To make your towers a flemens-firth.<sup>1</sup>  
 We claim from thee William of Deloraine,  
 That he may suffer march-treason pain.  
 It was but last St. Cuthbert's even  
 He prick'd to Stapleton on Leven,  
 Harried<sup>2</sup> the lands of Richard Musgrave,  
 And slew his brother by dint of glaive.  
 Then, since a lone and widow'd Dame  
 These restless riders may not tame,  
 Either receive within thy towers  
 Two hundred of my master's powers,  
 Or straight they sound their warrison,<sup>3</sup>  
 And storm and spoil thy garrison :  
 And this fair boy, to London led,  
 Shall good King Edward's page be bred."

## XXV.

He ceased — and loud the boy did cry,  
 And stretch'd his little arms on high ;  
 Implored for aid each well-known face,  
 And strove to seek the Dame's embrace.  
 A moment changed that Ladye's cheer,  
 Gush'd to her eye the unbidden tear ;  
 She gazed upon the leaders round,  
 And dark and sad each warrior frown'd ;  
 Then, deep within her sobbing breast  
 She lock'd the struggling sigh to rest ;  
 Unalter'd and collected stood,  
 And thus replied, in dauntless mood : —

## XXVI.

" Say to your Lords of high emprise,  
 Who war on women and on boys,  
 That either William of Deloraine  
 Will cleanse him, by oath, of march-treason stain,  
 Or else he will the combat take  
 'Gainst Musgrave, for his honor's sake.  
 No knight in Cumberland so good,  
 But William may count with him kin and blood.

<sup>1</sup> An asylum for outlaws.<sup>2</sup> Plundered.<sup>3</sup> Note of assault.

Knighthood he took of Douglas' sword,  
 When English blood swell'd Ancram's ford ;  
 And but Lord Dacre's steed was wight,  
 And bare him ably in the flight,  
 Himself had seen him dubb'd a knight.  
 For the young heir of Branksome's line,  
 God be his aid, and God be mine ;  
 Through me no friend shall meet his doom ;  
 Here, while I live, no foe finds room.

Then, if thy Lords their purpose urge,  
 Take our defiance loud and high ;  
 Our slogan is their lyke-wake<sup>1</sup> dirge,  
 Our moat, the grave where they shall lie."

## XXVII.

Proud she look'd round, applause to claim —  
 Then lighten'd Thirlestane's eye of flame ;  
 His bugle Wat of Harden blew ;  
 Pensils and pennons wide were flung,  
 To heaven the Border slogan rung,  
 " St. Mary for the young Buccleuch ! "  
 The English war-cry answered wide,  
 And forward bent each southern spear ;  
 Each Kendal archer made a stride,  
 And drew the bowstring to his ear ;  
 Each minstrel's war-note loud was blown ; —  
 But, ere a gray-goose shaft had flown,  
 A horseman gallop'd from the rear.

## XXVIII.

" Ah ! noble Lords ! " he breathless said,  
 " What treason has your march betray'd ?  
 What make you here, from aid so far,  
 Before you walls, around you war ?  
 Your foemen triumph in the thought,  
 That in the toils the lion's caught.  
 Already on dark Ruberslaw  
 The Douglas holds his weapon-schaw ; <sup>2</sup>  
 The lances, waving in his train,  
 Clothe the dun heath like autumn grain ;

<sup>1</sup> *Lyke-wake*, the watching a corpse previous to interment.

<sup>2</sup> *Weapon-schaw*, the military array of a county.



And on the Liddel's northern strand,  
 To bar retreat to Cumberland,  
 Lord Maxwell ranks his merry men good,  
 Beneath the eagle and the rood ;  
     And Jedwood, Eske, and Teviotdale,  
     Have to proud Angus come ;  
     And all the Merse and Lauderdale  
     Have risen with haughty Home.  
 An exile from Northumberland,  
     In Liddesdale I've wander'd long ;  
 But still my heart was with merry England,  
     And cannot brook my country's wrong ;  
 And hard I've spurr'd all night to show  
 The mustering of coming foe." —

## XXIX.

" And let them come ! " fierce Dacre cried ;  
 " For soon yon crest, my father's pride,  
 That swept the shores of Judah's sea,  
 And waved in gales of Galilee,  
 From Branksome's highest towers display'd,  
 Shall mock the rescue's lingering aid ! —  
 Level each harquebuss on row ;  
 Draw, merry archers, draw the bow ;  
 Up, bill-men, to the walls, and cry,  
 Dacre for England, win or die ! " —

## XXX.

" Yet hear," quoth Howard, " calmly hear,  
 Nor deem my words the words of fear :  
 For who, in field or foray slack,  
 Saw the blanche lion e'er fall back ?  
 But thus to risk our Border flower  
 In strife against a kingdom's power,  
 Ten thousand Scots 'gainst thousands three,  
 Certes, were desperate policy.  
 Nay, take the terms the Ladye made,  
 Ere conscious of the advancing aid :  
 Let Musgrave meet fierce Deloraine  
 In single fight ; and, if he gain,  
 He gains for us ; but if he's cross'd,  
 'Tis but a single warrior lost :

The rest, retreating as they came,  
Avoid defeat, and death, and shame."

XXXI.

Ill could the haughty Dacre brook  
His brother Warden's sage rebuke ;  
And yet his forward step he stay'd,  
And slow and sullenly obeyed.  
But ne'er again the Border side  
Did these two lords in friendship ride :  
And this slight discontent, men say,  
Cost blood upon another day.

XXXII.

The pursuivant-at-arms again  
Before the castle took his stand ;  
His trumpet call'd, with parleying strain,  
The leaders of the Scottish band ;  
And he defied, in Musgrave's right,  
Stout Deloraine to single fight ;  
A gauntlet at their feet he laid,  
And thus the terms of fight he said : —  
" If in the lists good Musgrave's sword  
Vanquish the knight of Deloraine,  
Your youthful chieftain, Branksome's Lord,  
Shall hostage for his clan remain :  
If Deloraine foil good Musgrave,  
The boy his liberty shall have.  
Howe'er it falls, the English band,  
Unharming Scots, by Scots unharm'd,  
In peaceful march, like men unarm'd,  
Shall straight retreat to Cumberland."

XXXIII.

Unconscious of the near relief,  
The proffer pleased each Scottish chief,  
Though much the Ladye sage gainsay'd ;  
For though their hearts were brave and true,  
From Jedwood's recent sack they knew,  
How tardy was the Regent's aid ;  
And you may guess the noble Dame  
Durst not the secret prescience own,  
Sprung from the art she might not name,

By which the coming help was known.  
 Closed was the compact, and agreed,  
 That lists should be enclosed with speed,  
     Beneath the castle, on a lawn :  
 They fix'd the morrow for the strife,  
 On foot, with Scottish axe and knife,  
     At the fourth hour from peep of dawn ;  
 When Deloraine, from sickness freed,  
 Or else a champion in his stead,  
 Should for himself and chieftain stand,  
 Against stout Musgrave, hand to hand.

## XXXIV.

I know right well, that, in their lay,  
 Full many minstrels sing and say,  
     Such combat should be made on horse,  
 On foaming steed, in full career,  
 With brand to aid, when as the spear  
     Should shiver in the course :  
 But he, the jovial Harper, taught  
 Me, yet a youth, how it was fought,  
     In guise which now I say ;  
 He knew each ordinance and clause  
 Of Black Lord Archibald's battle-laws,  
     In the old Douglas' day.  
 He brook'd not, he, that scoffing tongue  
 Should tax his minstrelsy with wrong,  
     Or call his song untrue :  
 For this, when they the goblet plied,  
 And such rude taunt had chafed his pride,  
     The Bard of Reull he slew.  
 On Teviot's side, in fight they stood,  
 And tuneful hands were stain'd with blood ;  
 Where still the thorn's white branches wave,  
 Memorial o'er his rival's grave.

## XXXV.

Why should I tell the rigid doom,  
 That dragg'd my master to his tomb ;  
     How Ousenam's maidens tore their hair,  
 Wept till their eyes were dead and dim,  
 And wrung their hands for love of him,  
     Who died at Jedwood Air ?

He died ! — his scholars, one by one,  
To the cold silent grave are gone ;  
And I, alas ! survive alone,  
To muse o'er rivalries of yore,  
And grieve that I shall hear no more  
The strains, with envy heard before ;  
For, with my minstrel brethren fled,  
My jealousy of song is dead.

---

HE paused: the listening dames again  
Applaud the hoary Minstrel's strain.  
With many a word of kindly cheer, —  
In pity half, and half sincere, —  
Marvell'd the Duchess how so well  
His legendary song could tell —  
Of ancient deeds, so long forgot ;  
Of feuds, whose memory was not ;  
Of forests, now laid waste and bare ;  
Of towers, which harbor now the hare ;  
Of manners, long since changed and gone ;  
Of chiefs, who under their gray stone  
So long had slept, that fickle Fame  
Had blotted from her rolls their name,  
And twined round some new minion's head  
The fading wreath for which they bled ;  
In sooth, 'twas strange, this old man's verse  
Could call them from their marble hearse.

The Harper smiled, well pleased ; for ne'er  
Was flattery lost on Poet's ear :  
A simple race ! they waste their toil  
For the vain tribute of a smile ;  
E'en when in age their flame expires,  
Her dulcet breath can fan its fires :  
Their drooping fancy wakes at praise,  
And strives to trim the short-lived blaze.

Smiled, then, well-pleased, the Aged Man,  
And thus his tale continued ran.

## CANTO FIFTH.

## I.

CALL it not vain : — they do not err,  
Who say, that when the Poet dies,  
Mute Nature mourns her worshipper,  
And celebrates his obsequies :  
Who say, tall cliff, and cavern lone,  
For the departed Bard make moan ;  
That mountains weep in crystal rill ;  
That flowers in tears of balm distil ;  
Through his loved groves that breezes sigh,  
And oaks, in deeper groan, reply ;  
And rivers teach their rushing wave  
To murmur dirges round his grave.

## II.

Not that, in sooth, o'er mortal urn  
Those things inanimate can mourn ;  
But that the stream, the wood, the gale,  
Is vocal with the plaintive wail  
Of those, who, else forgotten long,  
Lived in the poet's faithful song,  
And, with the poet's parting breath,  
Whose memory feels a second death.  
The Maid's pale shade, who wails her lot,  
That love, true love, should be forgot,  
From rose and hawthorn shakes the tear  
Upon the gentle Minstrel's bier :  
The phantom Knight, his glory fled,  
Mourns o'er the field he heap'd with dead ;  
Mounts the wild blast that sweeps amain,  
And shrieks along the battle-plain.  
The Chief, whose antique crownlet long  
Still sparkled in the feudal song,  
Now, from the mountain's misty throne,  
Sees, in the thanedom once his own,  
His ashes undistinguished lie,  
His place, his power, his memory die :  
His groans the lonely caverns fill,  
His tears of rage impel the rill ;

All mourn the Minstrel's harp unstrung,  
Their name unknown, their praise unsung.

III.

Scarcely the hot assault was staid,  
The terms of truce were scarcely made,  
When they could spy, from Branksome's towers,  
The advancing march of martial powers.  
Thick clouds of dust afar appear'd,  
And trampling steeds were faintly heard ;  
Bright spears above the columns dun,  
Glanced momentary to the sun ;  
And feudal banners fair display'd  
The bands that moved to Branksome's aid.

IV.

Vails not to tell each hardy clan,  
From the fair Middle Marches came ;  
The Bloody Heart blazed in the van,  
Announcing Douglas, dreaded name !  
Vails not to tell what steeds did spurn,  
Where the Seven Spears of Wedderburne  
Their men in battle-order set ;  
And Swinton laid the lance in rest,  
That tamed of yore the sparkling crest  
Of Clarence's Plantagenet.  
Nor list I say what hundreds more,  
From the rich Merse and Lammermore,  
And Tweed's fair borders, to the war,  
Beneath the crest of old Dunbar,  
And Hepburn's mingled banners come,  
Down the steep mountain glittering far,  
And shouting still, " A Home ! a Home ! "

V.

Now squire and knight, from Branksome sent,  
On many a courteous message went ;  
To every chief and lord they paid  
Meet thanks for prompt and powerful aid ;  
And told them, — how a truce was made,

And how a day of fight was ta'en  
 'Twixt Musgrave and stout Deloraine,  
 And how the Ladye pray'd them dear,  
 That all would stay the fight to see,  
 And deign, in love and courtesy,  
     To taste of Branksome cheer.  
 Nor, while they bade to feast each Scot,  
 Were England's noble Lords forgot.  
 Himself, the hoary Seneschal  
 Rode forth, in seemly terms to call  
 Those gallant foes to Branksome Hall.  
 Accepted Howard, than whom knight  
 Was never dubb'd, more bold in fight ;  
 Nor, when from war and armor free,  
 More famed for stately courtesy :  
 But angry Dacre rather chose  
 In his pavilion to repose.

## VI.

Now, noble Dame, perchance you ask,  
     How these two hostile armies met?  
 Deeming it were no easy task  
     To keep the truce which here was set ;  
 Where martial spirits, all on fire,  
 Breathed only blood and mortal ire. —  
 By mutual inroads, mutual blows,  
 By habit, and by nation, foes,  
     They met on Teviot's strand ;  
 They met and sate them mingled down,  
 Without a threat, without a frown,  
     As brothers meet in foreign land :  
 The hands, the spear that lately grasp'd,  
 Still in the mailed gauntlet clasp'd,  
     Were interchanged in greeting dear ;  
 Visors were raised, and faces shown,  
 And many a friend, to friend made known,  
     Partook of social cheer.  
 Some drove the jolly bowl about :  
     With dice and draughts some chased the day,  
 And some, with many a merry shout,  
 In riot, revelry, and rout,  
     Pursued the foot-ball play.



## VII.

Yet, be it known, had bugles blown,  
 Or sign of war been seen,  
 Those bands, so fair together ranged,  
 Those hands, so frankly interchanged,  
 Had dyed with gore the green :  
 The merry shout by Teviot-side  
 Had sunk in war-cries wild and wide,  
 And in the groan of death ;  
 And whingers,<sup>1</sup> now in friendship bare,  
 The social meal to part and share,  
 Had found a bloody sheath.  
 'Twixt truce and war, such sudden change  
 Was not infrequent, nor held strange,  
 In the old Border-day :  
 But yet on Branksome's towers and town,  
 In peaceful merriment, sunk down  
 The sun's declining ray.

## VIII.

The blithesome signs of wassel gay  
 Decay'd not with the dying day :  
 Soon through the latticed windows tall  
 Of lofty Branksome's lordly hall,  
 Divided square by shafts of stone,  
 Huge flakes of ruddy lustre shone ;  
 Nor less the gilded rafters rang  
 With merry harp and beaker's clang :  
 And frequent, on the darkening plain,  
 Loud hollo, whoop, or whistle ran,  
 As bands, their stragglers to regain,  
 Give the shrill watchword of their clan ;  
 And revellers, o'er their bowls, proclaim  
 Douglas' or Dacre's conquering name.

## IX.

Less frequent heard, and fainter still,  
 At length the various clamors died :  
 And you might hear, from Branksome hill,  
 No sound but Teviot's rushing tide ;

<sup>1</sup> A sort of knife, or poniard.

Save when the changing sentinel  
 The challenge of his watch could tell ;  
 And save, where, through the dark profound,  
 The clanging axe and hammer's sound  
     Rung from the nether lawn ;  
 For many a busy hand foil'd there,  
 Strong pales to shape, and beams to square,  
 The lists' dread barriers to prepare  
     Against the morrow's dawn.

## X.

Margaret from hall did soon retreat,  
     Despite the Dame's reproving eye ;  
 Nor mark'd she, as she left her seat,  
     Full many a stifled sigh ;  
 For many a noble warrior strove  
 To win the Flower of Teviot's love,  
     And many a bold ally. —  
 With throbbing head and anxious heart,  
 All in her lonely bower apart,  
     In broken sleep she lay :  
 By times, from silken couch she rose ;  
 While yet the banner'd hosts repose,  
     She view'd the dawning day :  
 Of all the hundreds sunk to rest,  
 First woke the loveliest and the best.

## XI.

She gazed upon the inner court,  
     Which in the tower's tall shadow lay ;  
 Where coursers' clang, and stamp, and snort,  
     Had rung the livelong yesterday ;  
 Now still as death ; till stalking slow, —  
     The jingling spurs announced his tread, —  
 A stately warrior pass'd below ;  
     But when he raised his plumed head —  
     Blessed Mary ! can it be ? —  
 Secure, as if in Ousenam bowers,  
 He walks through Branksome's hostile towers,  
     With fearless step and free.  
 She dared not sign, she dared not speak —  
 Oh ! if one page's slumbers break,  
     His blood the price must pay !

Not all the pearls Queen Mary wears,  
Not Margaret's yet more precious tears,  
Shall buy his life a day.

XII.

Yet was his hazard small ; for well  
You may bethink you of the spell  
Of that sly urchin page ;  
This to his lord he did impart,  
And made him seem, by glamour art,  
A knight from Hermitage.  
Unchallenged thus, the warder's post,  
The court, unchallenged, thus he cross'd,  
For all the vassalage :  
But O ! what magic's quaint disguise  
Could blind fair Margaret's azure eyes !  
She started from her seat ;  
While with surprise and fear she strove,  
And both could scarcely master love —  
Lord Henry's at her feet.

XIII.

Oft have I mused, what purpose bad  
That foul malicious urchin had  
To bring this meeting round ;  
For happy love's a heavenly sight,  
And by a vile malignant sprite  
In such no joy is found ;  
And oft I've deem'd, perchance he thought  
Their erring passion might have wrought  
Sorrow, and sin, and shame ;  
And death to Cranstoun's gallant Knight,  
And to the gentle lady bright,  
Disgrace, and loss of fame.  
But earthly spirit could not tell  
The heart of them that loved so well.  
True love's the gift which God has given  
To man alone beneath the heaven :  
It is not fantasy's hot fire,  
Whose wishes, soon as granted, fly ;  
It liveth not in fierce desire,  
With dead desire it doth not die ;

It is the secret sympathy,  
 The silver link, the silken tie,  
 Which heart to heart, and mind to mind,  
 In body and in soul can bind. —  
 Now leave we Margaret and her Knight,  
 To tell you of the approaching fight.

## XIV.

Their warning blasts the bugles blew,  
 The pipe's shrill port<sup>1</sup> aroused each clan;  
 In haste, the deadly strife to view,  
 The trooping warriors eager ran:  
 Thick round the lists their lances stood,  
 Like blasted pines in Ettrick Wood;  
 To Branksome many a look they threw  
 The combatants' approach to view,  
 And bandied many a word of boast,  
 About the knight each favor'd most.

## XV.

Meantime full anxious was the Dame;  
 For now arose disputed claim,  
 Of who should fight for Deloraine,  
 'Twixt Harden and 'twixt Thirlestane;  
 They 'gan to reckon kin and rent,  
 And frowning brow on brow was bent;  
 But yet not long the strife — for, lo!  
 Himself, the Knight of Deloraine,  
 Strong, as it seem'd and free from pain,  
 In armor sheath'd from top to toe,  
 Appear'd, and craved the combat due.  
 The Dame her charm successful knew,  
 And the fierce chiefs their claims withdrew.

## XVI.

When for the lists they sought the plain,  
 The stately Ladye's silken rein  
 Did noble Howard hold;  
 Unarmed by her side he walk'd,  
 And much, in courteous phrase, they talk'd  
 Of feats of arms of old.

<sup>1</sup> A martial piece of music, adapted to the bagpipes.

Costly his garb — his Flemish ruff  
 Fell o'er his doublet, shaped of buff,  
 With satin slash'd and lined ;  
 Tawny his boot, and gold his spur,  
 His cloak was all of Poland fur,  
 His hose with silver twined ;  
 His Bilboa blade, by Marchmen felt,  
 Hung in a broad and studded belt ;  
 Hence, in rude phrase, the Borderers still  
 Call'd noble Howard, Belted Will.

## XVII.

Behind Lord Howard and the Dame,  
 Fair Margaret on her palfrey came,  
 Whose foot-cloth swept the ground :  
 White was her wimple, and her veil,  
 And her loose locks a chaplet pale  
 Of whitest roses bound ;  
 The lordly Angus, by her side,  
 In courtesy to cheer her tried ;  
 Without his aid, her hand in vain  
 Had strove to guide her broider'd rein.  
 He deem'd, she shudder'd at the sight  
 Of warriors met for mortal fight ;  
 But cause of terror, all unguess'd,  
 Was fluttering in her gentle breast,  
 When, in their chairs of crimson placed,  
 The Dame and she the barriers graced.

## XVIII.

Prize of the field, the young Buccleuch,  
 An English knight led forth to view ;  
 Scarce rued the boy his present plight,  
 So much he long'd to see the fight.  
 Within the lists, in knightly pride,  
 High Home and haughty Dacre ride ;  
 Their leading staffs of steel they wield,  
 As marshals of the mortal field ;  
 While to each knight their care assign'd  
 Like vantage of the sun and wind.  
 Then heralds hoarse did loud proclaim,  
 In King and Queen, and Warden's name,  
 That none, while lasts the strife,

Should dare, by look, or sign, or word,  
 Aid to a champion to afford,  
     On peril of his life ;  
 And not a breath the silence broke,  
 Till thus the alternate Heralds spoke : —

## XIX.

## ENGLISH HERALD.

“ Here standeth Richard of Musgrave,  
     Good knight and true, and freely born,  
 Amends from Deloraine to crave,  
     For foul despiteous scathe and scorn.  
 He sayeth, that William of Deloraine  
     Is traitor false by Border laws ;  
 This with his sword he will maintain,  
     So help him God, and his good cause ! ”

## XX.

## SCOTTISH HERALD.

“ Here standeth William of Deloraine,  
     Good knight and true, of noble strain,  
 Who sayeth, that foul treason’s stain,  
     Since he bore arms, ne’er soil’d his coat :  
     And that, so help him God above !  
     He will on Musgrave’s body prove,  
 He lies most foully in his throat.”

## LORD DACRE.

“ Forward, brave champions, to the fight !  
 Sound trumpets ! ” —

## LORD HOME.

— “ God defend the right ! ” —  
 Then Teviot ! how thine echoes rang,  
 When bugle-sound and trumpet-clang  
     Let loose the martial foes,  
 And in mid list, with shield poised high,  
 And measured step and wary eye,  
     The combatants did close.

## XXI.

Ill would it suit your gentle ear,  
 Ye lovely listeners, to hear  
 How to the axe the helms did sound,  
 And blood pour'd down from many a wound ;  
 For desperate was the strife, and long,  
 And either warrior fierce and strong.  
 But, were each dame a listening knight,  
 I well could tell how warriors fight !  
 For I have seen war's lightning flashing,  
 Seen the claymore with bayonet clashing,  
 Seen through red blood the war-horse dashing,  
 And scorn'd, amid the reeling strife,  
 To yield a step for death or life. —

## XXII.

'Tis done, 'tis done ! that fatal blow  
 Has stretch'd him on the bloody plain ;  
 He strives to rise — brave Musgrave, no !  
 Thence never shalt thou rise again !  
 He chokes in blood — some friendly hand  
 Undo the visor's barred band,  
 Unfix the gorget's iron clasp,  
 And give him room for life to gasp !  
 O, bootless aid ! — haste, holy Friar,  
 Haste, ere the sinner shall expire !  
 Of all his guilt let him be shriven,  
 And smoothe his path from earth to heaven !

## XXIII.

In haste the holy Friar sped : —  
 His naked foot was dyed with red,  
 As through the lists he ran :  
 Unmindful of the shouts on high,  
 That hail'd the conqueror's victory,  
 He raised the dying man ;  
 Loose waved his silver beard and hair,  
 As o'er him he kneel'd down in prayer ;  
 And still the crucifix on high  
 He holds before his darkening eye ;  
 And still he bends an anxious ear,  
 His faltering penitence to hear ;



Still props him from the bloody sod,  
 Still, even when soul and body part,  
 Pours ghostly comfort on his heart,  
 And bids him trust in God!  
 Unheard he prays ; — the death-pang's o'er!  
 Richard of Musgrave breathes no more.

## XXIV.

As if exhausted in the fight,  
 Or musing o'er the piteous sight,  
 The silent victor stands ;  
 His beaver did he not unclasp,  
 Mark'd not the shouts, felt not the grasp  
 Of gratulating hands.  
 When lo! strange cries of wild surprise,  
 Mingled with seeming terror, rise  
 Among the Scottish bands ;  
 And all, amid the throng'd array,  
 In panic haste gave open way  
 To a half-naked ghastly man,  
 Who downward from the castle ran :  
 He cross'd the barriers at a bound,  
 And wild and haggard look'd around,  
 As dizzy, and in pain ;  
 And all, upon the armed ground,  
 Knew William of Deloraine !  
 Each ladye sprung from seat with speed :  
 Vaulted each marshal from his steed ;  
 " And who art thou," they cried,  
 " Who hast this battle fought and won ?"  
 His plumed helm was soon undone !  
 " Cranstoun of Teviot-side !  
 For this fair prize I've fought and won," —  
 And to the Ladye led her son.

## XXV.

Full oft the rescued boy she kiss'd,  
 And often press'd him to her breast ;  
 For, under all her dauntless show,  
 Her heart had throbb'd at every blow ;  
 Yet not Lord Cranstoun deign'd she greet,  
 Though low he kneeled at her feet.

Me lists not tell what words were made,  
What Douglas, Home, and Howard said —

— For Howard was a generous foe —  
And how the clan united pray'd

The Ladye would the feud forego,  
And deign to bless the nuptial hour  
Of Cranstoun's Lord and Teviot's Flower.

## XXVI.

She look'd to river, look'd to hill,

Thought on the Spirit's prophecy,  
Then broke her silence stern and still, —

“Not you, but Fate, has vanquish'd me ;  
Their influence kindly stars may shower  
On Teviot's tide and Branksome's tower,

For pride is quell'd, and love is free.” —  
She took fair Margaret by the hand,  
Who, breathless, trembling, scarce might stand ;

That hand to Cranstoun's lord gave she : —

“As I am true to thee and thine,  
Do thou be true to me and mine !

This clasp of love our bond shall be ;  
For this is your betrothing day,  
And all these noble lords shall stay,

To grace it with their company.” —

## XXVII.

All as they left the listed plain,

Much of the story she did gain ;

How Cranstoun fought with Deloraine,

And of his page, and of the Book

Which from the wounded knight he took ;

And how he sought her castle high,

That morn, by help of gramarye ;

How, in Sir William's armor dight,

Stolen by his page, while slept the knight,

He took on him the single fight.

But half his tale he left unsaid,

And linger'd till he join'd the maid. —

Cared not the Ladye to betray

Her mystic arts in view of day ;

But well she thought, ere midnight came,

Of that strange page the pride to tame,

From his foul hands the Book to save,  
 And send it back to Michael's grave. —  
 Needs not to tell each tender word  
 'Twixt Margaret and 'twixt Cranstoun's lord ;  
 Nor how she told of former woes,  
 And how her bosom fell and rose,  
 While he and Musgrave bandied blows. —  
 Needs not these lovers' joys to tell :  
 One day, fair maids, you'll know them well.

## XXVIII.

William of Deloraine, some chance  
 Had waken'd from his deathlike trance ;  
     And taught that, in the listed plain,  
 Another, in his arms and shield,  
 Against fierce Musgrave axe did wield,  
     Under the name of Deloraine.  
 Hence, to the field, unarm'd, he ran,  
 And hence his presence scared the clan,  
 Who held him for some fleeting wraith,<sup>1</sup>  
 And not a man of blood and breath.  
     Not much this new ally he loved,  
     Yet, when he saw what hap had proved,  
     He greeted him right heartilie :  
 He would not waken old debate,  
 For he was void of rancorous hate,  
     Though rude, and scant of courtesy ;  
 In raids he spilt but seldom blood,  
 Unless when men-at arms withstood,  
 Or, as was meet, for deadly feud.  
 He ne'er bore grudge for stalwart blow,  
 Ta'en in fair fight from gallant foe :  
     And so 'twas seen of him, e'en now,  
     When on dead Musgrave he look'd down ;  
     Grief darkened on his rugged brow,  
     Though half disguised with a frown ;  
 And thus, while sorrow bent his head,  
 His foeman's epitaph he made : —

## XXIX.

“ Now, Richard Musgrave, liest thou here !  
     I ween, my deadly enemy ;

<sup>1</sup> The spectral apparition of a living person.

For, if I slew thy brother dear,  
 Thou slew'st a sister's son to me;  
 And when I lay in dungeon dark,  
 Of Naworth Castle, long months three,  
 Till ransom'd for a thousand mark,  
 Dark Musgrave, it was long of thee.  
 And, Musgrave, could our fight be tried,  
 And thou wert now alive, as I,  
 No mortal man should us divide,  
 Till one, or both of us, did die:  
 Yet rest thee God! for well I know  
 I ne'er shall find a nobler foe.  
 In all the northern counties here,  
 Whose word is Snaffle, spur, and spear,  
 Thou wert the best to follow gear!  
 'Twas pleasure, as we look'd behind,  
 To see how thou the chase could'st wind,  
 Cheer the dark blood-hound on his way,  
 And with the bugle rouse the fray!  
 I'd give the lands of Deloraine,  
 Dark Musgrave were alive again." —

## XXX.

So mourn'd he, till Lord Dacre's band  
 Were bowning back to Cumberland.  
 They raised brave Musgrave from the field,  
 And laid him on his bloody shield;  
 On levell'd lances, four and four,  
 By turns, the noble burden bore.  
 Before, at times, upon the gale,  
 Was heard the Minstrel's plaintive wail;  
 Behind, four priests, in sable stole,  
 Sung requiem for the warrior's soul:  
 Around, the horsemen slowly rode;  
 With trailing pikes the spearmen trode;  
 And thus the gallant knight they bore,  
 Through Liddesdale to Leven's shore;  
 Thence to Holme Coltrame's lofty nave,  
 And laid him in his father's grave.

---

THE harp's wild notes, though hush'd the song,  
 The mimic march of death prolong;

Now seems it far, and now a-near,  
 Now meets, and now eludes the ear ;  
 Now seems some mountain side to sweep,  
 Now faintly dies in valley deep ;  
 Seems now as if the Minstrel's wail,  
 Now the sad requiem, loads the gale ;  
 Last, o'er the warrior's closing grave,  
 Rung the full choir in choral stave.

After due pause, they bade him tell,  
 Why he, who touch'd the harp so well,  
 Should thus, with ill-rewarded toil,  
 Wander a poor and thankless soil,  
 When the more generous Southern Land  
 Would well requite his skilful hand.

The Aged Harper, howsoe'er  
 His only friend, his harp, was dear,  
 Liked not to hear it rank'd so high  
 Above his flowing poesy :  
 Less liked he still, that scornful jeer  
 Misprised the land he loved so dear ;  
 High was the sound, as thus again  
 The Bard resumed his minstrel strain.

## CANTO SIXTH.

### I.

BREATHES there the man, with soul so dead,  
 Who never to himself hath said,

This is my own, my native land !  
 Whose heart hath ne'er within him burn'd,  
 As home his footsteps he hath turn'd,

From wandering on a foreign strand !  
 If such there breathe, go, mark him well ;  
 For him no minstrel raptures swell ;  
 High though his titles, proud his name,  
 Boundless his wealth as wish can claim ;  
 Despite those titles, power, and pelf,  
 The wretch, concentred all in self,

Living, shall forfeit fair renown,  
And, doubly dying, shall go down  
To the vile dust, from whence he sprung,  
Unwept, unhonor'd, and unsung.

II.

O Caledonia! stern and wild,  
Meet nurse for a poetic child!  
Land of brown heath and shaggy wood,  
Land of the mountain and the flood,  
Land of my sires! what mortal hand  
Can e'er untie the filial band,  
That knits me to thy rugged strand!  
Still, as I view each well-known scene,  
Think what is now, and what hath been,  
Seems as, to me, of all bereft,  
Sole friends thy woods and streams were left;  
And thus I love them better still,  
Even in extremity of ill.  
By Yarrow's streams still let me stray,  
Though none should guide my feeble way;  
Still feel the breeze down Ettrick break,  
Although it chill my wither'd cheek;<sup>1</sup>  
Still lay my head by Teviot Stone,  
Though there, forgotten and alone,  
The Bard may draw his parting groan.

III.

Not scorn'd like me! to Branksome Hall  
The Minstrels came, at festive call;  
Trooping they came, from near and far,  
The jovial priests of mirth and war;  
Alike for feast and fight prepared,  
Battle and banquet both they shared.  
Of late, before each martial clan,  
They blew their death-note in the van,  
But now, for every merry mate,  
Rose the portcullis' iron grate;  
They sound the pipe, they strike the string,

<sup>1</sup> This and the three following lines form the inscription on the monument to Scott in the market-place of Selkirk.

They dance, they revel, and they sing,  
Till the rude turrets shake and ring.

## IV.

Me lists not at this tide declare  
The splendor of the spousal rite,  
How muster'd in the chapel fair  
Both maid and matron, squire and knight ;  
Me lists not tell of owches rare,  
Of mantles green, and braided hair,  
And kirtles furr'd with miniver ;  
What plumage waved the altar round,  
How spurs and ringing chainlets sound ;  
And hard it were for bard to speak  
The changeful hue of Margaret's cheek ;  
That lovely hue which comes and flies,  
As awe and shame alternate rise !

## V.

Some bards have sung, the Ladye high  
Chapel or altar came not nigh ;  
Nor durst the rites of spousal grace,  
So much she fear'd each holy place.  
False slanders these : — I trust right well  
She wrought not by forbidden spell ;  
For mighty words and signs have power  
O'er sprites in planetary hour :  
Yet scarce I praise their venturous part,  
Who tamper with such dangerous art,  
But this for faithful truth I say,  
The Ladye by the altar stood,  
Of sable velvet her array,  
And on her head a crimson hood,  
With pearls embroider'd and entwined,  
Guarded with gold, with ermine lined ;  
A merlin sat upon her wrist,  
Held by a leash of silken twist.

## VI.

The spousal rites were ended soon :  
'Twas now the merry hour of noon,  
And in the lofty arched hall  
Was spread the gorgeous festival.



Steward and squire, with heedful haste,  
 Marshall'd the rank of every guest ;  
 Pages, with ready blade, were there,  
 The mighty meal to carve and share :  
 O'er capon, heron-shew, and crane,  
 And princely peacock's gilded train,  
 And o'er the boar-head, garnish'd brave,  
 And cygnet from St. Mary's wave ;  
 O'er ptarmigan and venison,  
 The priest had spoke his benison.  
 Then rose the riot and the din,  
 Above, beneath, without, within !  
 For, from the lofty balcony,  
 Rung trumpet, shalm, and psaltery :  
 Their clanging bowls old warriors quaff'd,  
 Loudly they spoke, and loudly laugh'd ;  
 Whisper'd young knights, in tone more mild,  
 To ladies fair ; and ladies smiled.  
 The hooded hawks, high perch'd on beam,  
 The clamor join'd with whistling scream,  
 And flapp'd their wings, and shook their bells,  
 In concert with the stag-hounds' yells.  
 Round go the flasks of ruddy wine,  
 From Bordeaux, Orleans, or the Rhine ;  
 Their tasks the busy sewers ply,  
 And all is mirth and revelry.

## VII.

The Goblin Page, omitting still  
 No opportunity of ill,  
 Strove now, while blood ran hot and high,  
 To rouse debate and jealousy ;  
 Till Conrad, Lord of Wolfenstein,  
 By nature fierce, and warm with wine,  
 And now in humor highly cross'd,  
 About some steeds his band had lost,  
 High words to words succeeding still.  
 Smote, with his gauntlet, stout Hunthill ;  
 A hot and hardy Rutherford,  
 Whom men called Dickon Draw-the-sword.  
 He took it on the page's saye,  
 Hunthill had driven these steeds away.

Then Howard, Home, and Douglas rose,  
 The kindling discord to compose :  
 Stern Rutherford right little said,  
 But bit his glove, and shook his head. —  
 A fortnight thence, in Inglewood,  
 Stout Conrade, cold, and drench'd in blood,  
 His bosom gored with many a wound,  
 Was by a woodman's lyme-dog found ;  
 Unknown the manner of his death,  
 Gone was his brand, both sword and sheath ;  
 But ever from that time, 'twas said,  
 That Dickon wore a Cologne blade.

## VIII.

The dwarf, who fear'd his master's eye  
 Might his foul treachery espie,  
 Now sought the castle buttery,  
 Where many a yeoman, bold and free,  
 Revell'd as merrily and well  
 As those that sat in lordly selle.  
 Watt Tinlinn, there, did frankly raise  
 The pledge to Arthur Fire-the-Braes ;  
 And he, as by his breeding bound,  
 To Howard's merry-men sent it round.  
 To quit them, on the English side,  
 Red Roland Forster loudly cried,  
 " A deep carouse to yon fair bride." —  
 At every pledge, from vat and pail,  
 Foam'd forth in floods the nut-brown ale ;  
 While shout the riders every one :  
 Such day of mirth ne'er cheered their clan,  
 Since old Buccleuch the name did gain,  
 When in the cleuch the buck was ta'en.

## IX.

The wily page, with vengeful thought,  
 Remember'd him of Tinlinn's yew,  
 And swore, it should be dearly bought  
 That ever he the arrow drew.  
 First, he the yeoman did molest,  
 With bitter gibe and taunting jest ;  
 Told, how he fled at Solway strife,  
 And how Hob Armstrong cheer'd his wife ;

Then, shunning still his powerful arm,  
 At unawares he wrought him harm ;  
 From trencher stole his choicest cheer,  
 Dash'd from his lips his can of beer ;  
 Then, to his knee sly creeping on,  
 With bodkin pierc'd him to the bone :  
 The venom'd wound, and festering joint,  
 Long after rued that bodkin's point.  
 The startled yeoman swore and spurn'd,  
 And board and flagons overturn'd.  
 Riot and clamor wild began ;  
 Back to the hall the Urchin ran ;  
 Took in a darkling nook his post,  
 And grinn'd, and mutter'd, "Lost ! lost ! lost !"

X.

By this, the Dame, lest farther fray  
 Should mar the concord of the day,  
 Had bid the Minstrels tune their lay.  
 And first stept forth old Albert Græme,  
 The Minstrel of that ancient name :  
 Was none who struck the harp so well,  
 Within the Land Debatable ;  
 Well friended, too, his hardy kin,  
 Whoever lost, were sure to win ;  
 They sought the beëves that made their broth,  
 In Scotland and in England both.  
 In homely guise, as nature bade,  
 His simple song the Borderer said.

XI.

ALBERT GRÆME.

It was an English ladye bright,  
 (The sun shines fair on Carlisle wall,)  
 And she would marry a Scottish knight,  
 For Love will still be lord of all.

Blithely they saw the rising sun,  
 When he shone fair on Carlisle wall,  
 But they were sad ere day was done,  
 Though Love was still the lord of all.

Her sire gave brooch and jewel fine,  
     Where the sun shines fair on Carlisle wall;  
 Her brother gave but a flask of wine,  
     For ire that Love was lord of all.

For she had lands, both meadow and lea,  
     Where the sun shines fair on Carlisle wall,  
 And he swore her death, ere he would see  
     A Scottish knight the lord of all.

## XII.

That wine she had not tasted well,  
     (The sun shines fair on Carlisle wall,)  
 When dead, in hër true love's arms, she fell,  
     For Love was still the lord of all!

He pierced her brother to the heart,  
     Where the sun shines fair on Carlisle wall: —  
 So perish all would true love part,  
     That Love may still be lord of all!

And then he took the cross divine,  
     (Where the sun shines fair on Carlisle wall,)  
 And died for her sake in Palestine;  
     So Love was still the lord of all!

Now all ye lovers, that faithful prove,  
     (The sun shines fair on Carlisle wall,)  
 Pray for their souls who died for love,  
     For Love shall still be lord of all!

## XIII.

As ended Albert's simple lay,  
     Arose a bard of loftier port;  
 For sonnet, rhyme, and roundelay,  
     Renown'd in haughty Henry's court:  
 There rung thy harp, unrivall'd long,  
 Fitztraver of the silver song!  
     The gentle Surrey loved his lyre —  
     Who has not heard of Surrey's fame?  
     His was the hero's soul of fire,  
     And his the bard's immortal name,  
 And his was love, exalted high  
 By all the glow of chivalry.

XIV.

They sought, together, climes afar,  
And oft, within some olive grove,  
When even came with twinkling star,  
They sung of Surrey's absent love.  
His step the Italian peasant stay'd,  
And deem'd that spirits from on high,  
Round where some hermit saint was laid,  
Were breathing heavenly melody;  
So sweet did harp and voice combine,  
To praise the name of Geraldine.

XV.

Fitztraver ! O what tongue may say  
The pangs thy faithful bosom knew,  
When Surrey, of the deathless lay,  
Ungrateful Tudor's sentence slew ?  
Regardless of the tyrant's frown,  
His harp call'd wrath and vengeance down.  
He left, for Naworth's iron towers,  
Windsor's green glades and courtly bowers,  
And, faithful to his patron's name,  
With Howard still Fitztraver came ;  
Lord William's foremost favorite he,  
And chief of all his minstrelsy.

XVI.

FITZTRAVER.

'Twas All-Soul's eve, and Surrey's heart beat high ;  
He heard the midnight bell with anxious start,  
Which told the mystic hour, approaching nigh,  
When wise Cornelius promised, by his art,  
To show to him the ladye of his heart,  
Albeit betwixt them roar'd the ocean grim ;  
Yet so the sage had hight to play his part,  
That he should see her form in life and limb,  
And mark, if still she loved, and still she thought of him.

XVII.

Dark was the vaulted room of gramarye,  
To which the wizard led the gallant Knight,

Save that before a mirror, huge and high,  
 A hallow'd taper shed a glimmering light  
 On mystic implements of magic might:  
 On cross, and character, and talisman,  
 And almagest, and altar, nothing bright:  
 For fitful was the lustre, pale and wan,  
 As watchlight by the bed of some departing man.

## XVIII.

But soon, within that mirror huge and high,  
 Was seen a self-emitted light to gleam;  
 And forms upon its breast the Earl 'gan spy,  
 Cloudy and indistinct, as feverish dream;  
 Till, slow arranging, and defined, they seem  
 To form a lordly and a lofty room,  
 Part lighted by a lamp with silver beam,  
 Placed by a couch of Agra's silken loom,  
 And part by moonshine pale, and part was hid in gloom.

## XIX.

Fair all the pageant — but how passing fair  
 The slender form, which lay on couch of Ind!  
 O'er her white bosom stray'd her hazel hair,  
 Pale her dear cheek, as if for love she pined;  
 All in her night-robe loose she lay reclined,  
 And, pensive, read from tablet eburnine,  
 Some strain that seem'd her inmost soul to find: —  
 That favor'd strain was Surrey's raptured line,  
 That fair and lovely form, the Lady Geraldine.

## XX.

Slow roll'd the clouds upon the lovely form,  
 And swept the goodly vision all away —  
 So royal envy roll'd the murky storm  
 O'er my beloved Master's glorious day.  
 Thou jealous, ruthless tyrant! Heaven repay  
 On thee, and on thy children's latest line,  
 The wild caprice of thy despotic sway,  
 The gory bridal bed, the plunder'd shrine,  
 The murder'd Surrey's blood, the tears of Geraldine!

## XXI.

Both Scots, and Southern chiefs, prolong  
 Applauses of Fitztraver's song ;  
 These hated Henry's name as death,  
 And those still held the ancient faith. —  
 Then, from his seat, with lofty air,  
 Rose Harold, bard of brave St. Clair ;  
 St. Clair, who, feasting high at Home,  
 Had with that lord to battle come.  
 Harold was born where restless seas  
 Howl round the storm-swept Orcades ;  
 Where erst St. Clairs held princely sway  
 O'er isle and islet, strait and bay ; —  
 Still nods their palace to its fall,  
 Thy pride and sorrow, fair Kirkwall ! —  
 Thence oft he mark'd fierce Pentland rave,  
 As if grim Odin rode her wave ;  
 And watch'd, the whilst, with visage pale,  
 And throbbing heart, the struggling sail ;  
 For all of wonderful and wild  
 Had rapture for the lonely child.

## XXII.

And much of wild and wonderful  
 In these rude isles might fancy cull ;  
 For thither came, in times afar,  
 Stern Lochlin's sons of roving war,  
 The Norsemen, train'd to spoil and blood,  
 Skill'd to prepare the raven's food ;  
 Kings of the main their leaders brave,  
 Their barks the dragons of the wave.  
 And there, in many a stormy vale,  
 The Scald had told his wondrous tale ;  
 And many a Runic column high  
 Had witnessed grim idolatry.  
 And thus had Harold, in his youth,  
 Learn'd many a Saga's rhyme uncouth, —  
 Of that Sea-Snake, tremendous curl'd,  
 Whose monstrous circle girds the world ;  
 Of those dread Maids, whose hideous yell  
 Maddens the battle's bloody swell ;



Of Chiefs, who, guided through the gloom  
 By the pale death-lights of the tomb,  
 Ransack'd the graves of warriors old,  
 Their falchions wrench'd from corpses' hold,  
 Waked the deaf tomb with war's alarms,  
 And bade the dead arise to arms!  
 With war and wonder all on flame,  
 To Roslin's bowers young Harold came,  
 Where, by sweet glen and greenwood tree,  
 He learn'd a milder minstrelsy;  
 Yet something of the Northern spell  
 Mix'd with the softer numbers well.

## XXIII.

## HAROLD.

O listen, listen, ladies gay!  
 No haughty feat of arms I tell;  
 Soft is the note, and sad the lay,  
 That mourns the lovely Rosabelle.

"Moor, moor the barge, ye gallant crew!  
 And, gentle ladye, deign to stay!  
 Rest thee in Castle Ravensheuch,  
 Nor tempt the stormy firth to-day.

"The blackening wave is edged with white;  
 To inch<sup>1</sup> and rock the sea-mews fly;  
 The fishers have heard the Water-Sprite,  
 Whose screams forebode that wreck is nigh.

"Last night the gifted Seer did view  
 A wet shroud swathed round ladye gay;  
 Then stay thee, Fair, in Ravensheuch;  
 Why cross the gloomy firth to-day?"—

"'Tis not because Lord Lindesay's heir  
 To-night at Roslin leads the ball,  
 But that my ladye-mother there  
 Sits lonely in her castle-hall.

"'Tis not because the ring they ride,  
 And Lindesay at the ring rides well,  
 But that my sire the wine will chide,  
 If 'tis not fill'd by Rosabelle."—

<sup>1</sup> *Inch*, isle.

O'er Roslin all that dreary night,  
A wondrous blaze was seen to gleam ;  
'Twas broader than the watch-fire's light,  
And redder than the bright moon-beam.

It glared on Roslin's castled rock,  
It ruddied all the copse-wood glen ;  
'Twas seen from Dryden's groves of oak,  
And seen from cavern'd Hawthornden.

Seem'd all on fire that chapel proud,  
Where Roslin's chiefs uncoffin'd lie,  
Each Baron, for a sable shroud,  
Sheathed in his iron panoply.

Seem'd all on fire within, around,  
Deep sacristy and altar's pale ;  
Shone every pillar foliage-bound,  
And glimmer'd all the dead men's mail.

Blazed battlement and pinnet high,  
Blazed every rose-carved buttress fair —  
So still they blaze, when fate is nigh  
The lordly line of high St. Clair.

There are twenty of Roslin's barons bold  
Lie buried within that proud chapelle ;  
Each one the holy vault doth hold —  
But the sea holds lovely Rosabelle.

And each St. Clair was buried there,  
With candle, with book, and with knell ;  
But the sea-caves rung, and the wild wings sung,  
The dirge of lovely Rosabelle !

XXIV.

So sweet was Harold's piteous lay,  
Scarce mark'd the guests the darkened hall,  
Though, long before the sinking day,  
A wondrous shade involved them all :  
It was not eddying mist or fog,  
Drain'd by the sun from fen or bog ;  
Of no eclipse had sages told ;  
And yet, as it came on apace,

Each one could scarce his neighbor's face,  
     Could scarce his own stretch'd hand behold.  
 A secret horror check'd the feast,  
 And chill'd the soul of every guest;  
 Even the high Dame stood half aghast,  
 She knew some evil on the blast;  
 The elvish page fell to the ground,  
 And, shuddering, mutter'd "Found! found! found!"

## XXV.

Then sudden, through the darken'd air  
     A flash of lightning came;  
 So broad, so bright, so red the glare,  
     The castle seem'd on flame.  
 Glanced every rafter of the hall,  
 Glanced every shield upon the wall;  
 Each trophied beam, each sculptured stone,  
 Were instant seen, and instant gone;  
 Full through the guests' bedazzled band  
 Resistless flash'd the levin-brand,  
 And fill'd the hall with smouldering smoke,  
 As on the elvish page it broke.  
     It broke with thunder long and loud,  
     Dismay'd the brave, appall'd the proud, —  
     From sea to sea the larum rung;  
     On Berwick wall, and at Carlisle withal,  
     To arms the startled warders sprung.  
 When ended was the dreadful roar,  
 The elvish dwarf was seen no more!

## XXVI.

Some heard a voice in Branksome Hall,  
 Some saw a sight, not seen by all;  
 That dreadful voice was heard by some,  
 Cry, with loud summons, "GYLBIN, COME!"  
     And on the spot where burst the brand,  
     Just where the page had flung him down,  
     Some saw an arm, and some a hand,  
     And some the waving of a gown.  
 The guests in silence prayed and shook,  
 And terror dimm'd each lofty look.  
 But none of all the astonished train  
 Was so dismay'd as Deloraine:

His blood did freeze, his brain did burn,  
 'Twas fear'd his mind would ne'er return;  
     For he was speechless, ghastly, wan,  
     Like him of whom the story ran,  
     Who spoke the spectre-hound in Man.  
 At length, by fits, he darkly told,  
 With broken hint, and shuddering cold —  
     That he had seen right certainly,  
*A shape with amice wrapp'd around,*  
*With a wrought Spanish baldrick bound,*  
*Like pilgrim from beyond the sea;*  
 And knew — but how it matter'd not —  
 It was the wizard, Michael Scott.

## XXVII.

The anxious crowd, with horror pale,  
 All trembling heard the wondrous tale;  
     No sound was made, no word was spoke,  
     Till noble Angus silence broke;  
     And he a solemn sacred plight  
     Did to St. Bride of Douglas make,  
     That he a pilgrimage would take,  
     To Melrose Abbey, for the sake  
     Of Michael's restless sprite.  
 Then each, to ease his troubled breast,  
 To some bless'd saint his prayers address'd:  
 Some to St. Modan made their vows,  
 Some to St. Mary of the Lowes,  
 Some to the Holy Rood of Lisle,  
 Some to our Ladye of the Isle;  
 Each did his patron witness make,  
 That he such pilgrimage would take,  
 And monks should sing, and bells should toll,  
 All for the weal of Michael's soul.  
 While vows were ta'en, and prayers were pray'd,  
 'Tis said the noble dame, dismay'd,  
 Renounced, for aye, dark magic's aid.

## XXVIII.

Nought of the bridal will I tell,  
 Which after in short space befell:  
 Nor how brave sons and daughters fair  
 Bless'd Teviot's Flower, and Cranstoun's heir:

After such dreadful scene, 'twere vain  
To wake the note of mirth again.

More meet it were to mark the day  
Of penitence, and prayer divine,  
When pilgrim-chiefs, in sad array,  
Sought Melrose' holy shrine.

## XXIX.

With naked foot, and sackcloth vest,  
And arms enfolded on his breast,  
Did every pilgrim go ;  
The standers-by might hear uneath,  
Footstep, or voice, or high-drawn breath,

Through all the lengthen'd row :  
No lordly look, nor martial stride ;  
Gone was their glory, sunk their pride,  
Forgotten their renown ;

Silent and slow, like ghosts they glide  
To the high altar's hallow'd side,

And there they knelt them down :  
Above the suppliant chieftains wave  
The banners of departed brave ;  
Beneath the letter'd stones were laid  
The ashes of their fathers dead ;  
From many a garnish'd niche around,  
Stern saints and tortured martyrs frown'd.

## XXX.

And slow up the dim aisle afar,  
With sable cowl and scapular,  
And snow-white stoles, in order due,  
The holy Fathers, two and two,

In long procession came ;  
Taper, and host, and book they bare,  
And holy banner, flourish'd fair

With the Redeemer's name.  
Above the prostrate pilgrim band  
The mitred Abbot stretch'd his hand,  
And bless'd them as they kneel'd ;  
With holy cross he signed them all,  
And pray'd they might be sage in hall,  
And fortunate in field.

Then mass was sung, and prayers were said,  
And solemn requiem for the dead ;  
And bells toll'd out their mighty peal,  
For the departed spirit's weal ;  
And ever in the office close  
The hymn of intercession rose ;  
And far the echoing aisles prolong  
The awful burthen of the song —

DIES IRÆ, DIES ILLA,  
SOLVET SÆCLUM IN FAVILLA ;  
While the pealing organ rung ;  
Were it meet with sacred strain  
To close my lay, so light and vain,  
Thus the holy Fathers sung : —

XXXI.

HYMN FOR THE DEAD.

That day of wrath, that dreadful day,  
When heaven and earth shall pass away,  
What power shall be the sinner's stay ?  
How shall he meet that dreadful day ?

When, shrivelling like a parched scroll,  
The flaming heavens together roll ;  
When louder yet, and yet more dread,  
Swells the high trump that wakes the dead !

Oh ! on that day, that wrathful day,  
When man to judgment wakes from clay,  
Be THOU the trembling sinner's stay,  
Though heaven and earth shall pass away !

---

HUSH'D is the harp — the Minstrel gone.  
And did he wander forth alone ?  
Alone, in indigence and age,  
To linger out his pilgrimage ?  
No ! — close beneath proud Newark's tower,  
Arose the Minstrel's lowly bower ;  
A simple hut ; but there was seen  
The little garden hedged with green,  
The cheerful hearth, and lattice clean.

There shelter'd wanderers, by the blaze,  
Oft heard the tale of other days ;  
For much he loved to ope his door,  
And give the aid he begg'd before.  
So pass'd the winter's day ; but still,  
When summer smiled on sweet Bowhill,  
And July's eve, with balmy breath,  
Wav'd the blue-bells on Newark heath ;  
When throstles sung in Harehead-shaw,  
And corn was green on Carterhaugh,  
And flourish'd, broad, Blackandro's oak,  
The aged Harper's soul awoke !  
Then would he sing achievements high,  
And circumstance of chivalry,  
Till the rapt traveller would stay,  
Forgetful of the closing day ;  
And noble youths the strain to hear,  
Forsook the hunting of the deer ;  
And Yarrow, as he roll'd along,  
Bore burden to the Minstrel's song.



# MARMION:

A TALE OF 'FLODDEN FIELD.

*IN SIX CANTOS.*

Alas ! that Scottish maid should sing  
The combat where her lover fell !  
That Scottish Bard should wake the string,  
The triumph of our foes to tell !

LEYDEN.

ADVERTISEMENT  
TO THE FIRST EDITION.

*It is hardly to be expected, that an Author whom the public have honored with some degree of applause, should not be again a trespasser on their kindness. Yet the Author of MARMION must be supposed to feel some anxiety concerning its success, since he is sensible that he hazards, by this second intrusion, any reputation which his first Poem may have procured him. The present story turns upon the private adventures of a fictitious character; but is called a Tale of Flodden Field, because the hero's fate is connected with that memorable defeat, and the causes which led to it. The design of the Author was, if possible, to apprise his readers, at the outset, of the date of his Story, and to prepare them for the manners of the Age in which it is laid. Any Historical Narrative, far more an attempt at Epic composition, exceeded his plan of a Romantic Tale; yet he may be permitted to hope, from the popularity of THE LAY OF THE LAST MINSTREL, that an attempt to paint the manners of the feudal times, upon a broader scale, and in the course of a more interesting story, will not be unacceptable to the Public.*

*The Poem opens about the commencement of August, and concludes with the defeat of Flodden, 9th September, 1513.*

ASHESTIEL, 1808.

## MARMION.

AFTER a success so brilliant and profitable as that which had been attained by the "Lay," it was only natural that a young and ambitious writer should be tempted quickly to resume his addresses to the muse, especially in the circumstances in which Scott was placed. He saw before him little prospect of advancement in his profession, for the practice of which he had never felt any inclination, and which continued to become more distasteful to him. Having to choose between literature and law, he was ready to decide in favor of the former, had not the sheriffship which he obtained in Dec. 1799, and the reversion of the clerkship of Session, which was assigned to him a few years later, enabled him to take a middle course, to apply himself to letters without rendering himself dependent for an income on the profits of his pen. The good fortune which crowned his first serious essay in literature confirmed this resolution, and another poem was quickly planned. With characteristic prudence Scott had determined not to be too hasty in this second venture, and to bestow upon it the thought and polish which the public would naturally expect from an author of his reputation. Some pecuniary embarrassment on the part of his brother Thomas caused him to break this cautious resolution. Constable, in association with some of the London booksellers, was quite willing to pay down a thousand pounds for the unwritten poem, and Scott was thus enabled to assist his brother in his difficulties. Byron, unaware of the generous purpose to which Scott applied the money, affected to be shocked at the mercenary nature of the bargain. The publishers, however, were only too glad to enter into the arrangement, and they were certainly no losers by their confidence and liberality. Commenced in Nov. 1806, "Marmion" was ready for the press in February, 1808. Two thousand copies of the first edition in quarto, at a guinea and a half, were disposed of in a month. A second edition, of 3,000 copies, immediately followed, and two other editions, each of the same extent, were called for before the end of 1809. By the beginning of 1836 as many as 50,000 copies had been disposed of.

Large as was the circulation of "Marmion," it can hardly be said to have been read with the same relish as the "Lay," yet it was in many respects an advance. Even Jeffrey, who was very severe on the defects of the second poem, is disposed to admit that if it has greater faults it has also greater beauties. "It has more flat and tedious passages, and more ostentation of historical and antiquarian lore, but it has also greater richness and variety, both of char-

acter and incident ; and if it has less sweetness and pathos in the softer passages, it has certainly more vehemence and force of coloring in the loftier and busier representations of action and emotion . . . more airiness and brightness in the higher delineations." Scott himself has acknowledged, in the preface of 1830, one of the chief defects of the story, although he endeavored to justify it in a note. This was the combination of mean felony with so many noble qualities in the character of the hero, especially as the crime belonged rather to a commercial than a proud, warlike, and uninstructed age. Leyden, amongst others, was furious at this oversight, and Scott owns that it ought to have been remedied or palliated. "Yet I suffered the tree," he says, "to lie as it had fallen, being satisfied that corrections, however judicious, have a bad effect after publication."

The letters prefixed to each canto were also a mistake in an artistic point of view. Every one will agree with Southey in wishing them "at the end of the volume, or the beginning, anywhere except where they are ;" and the best advice we can give the reader is, not to allow them to interrupt his perusal of the poem, but to regard them as independent pieces. Indeed, it was in this character they were originally intended to appear, and as such were advertised under the title of "Six Epistles from Ettrick Forest." Of the persons to whom the letters are addressed a few notes may be interesting. Mr. W. Stewart Rose was the author of "Letters from Rome," a translation of Ariosto, and other works — a genial, cultivated man, whose social qualities were higher than his literary powers. Scott not only met him frequently in London, but visited him at his marine villa, Gundimore, in Hampshire. The Rev. John Marriott was tutor to Lord Scott, the young heir of Buccleuch, to whom there is an allusion in the poem, and who died a few days after it was published. William Erskine, afterwards Lord Kinnedder, was one of Scott's oldest and most valued friends. Lockhart describes very forcibly the difference in their character and temperament ; Scott being strong, active, and passionately fond of rough bodily exercise, while Erskine was "a little man of feeble make, who seemed unhappy when his pony got beyond a footpace . . . who used to shudder when he saw a party equipped for coursing, as if murder were in the wind. His small, elegant features, hectic cheek, and soft hazel eyes, were the index of the quick, sensitive, gentle spirit within. He had the warm heart of a woman, her generous enthusiasm, and some of her weaknesses. A beautiful landscape, or a fine strain of music, would send the tears rolling down the cheek ; and, though capable, I have no doubt, of exhibiting, had his duty called him to do so, the highest spirit of a hero or a martyr, he had very little command over his nerves amidst circumstances such as men of ordinary mould (to say nothing of iron fabrics like Scott's) regard with indifference." Slow advancement at the bar somewhat soured his temper ; he shrank from general society, and moved only in a narrow circle of intimate friends. This retiring habit clung to him after he had obtained the long-coveted seat on the bench. He was at heart a generous, kindly man. His conversation, somewhat formal and precise, was rich in knowledge ; and his taste and keen criticism

was very valuable to his friend. Mr. James Skene, of Rubislaw, near Aberdeen, was another early friend of Scott, who had encouraged him in his German studies, and shared his military enthusiasm in the days of the expected invasion. Scott speaks of him in one of his letters as "distinguished for his attainments as a draughtsman, and for his highly gentlemanlike feelings and character. Admirable in all exercises, there entered a good deal of the cavalier into his early character." Mr. George Ellis is well known as the editor of a number of antiquarian works. He was a frequent correspondent and valued adviser of Scott. Richard Heber was brother of the Bishop and poet of the same name. He was long Member of Parliament for the University of Oxford, and a man of culture and social position. His knowledge of Middle Age literature and extensive library were of great assistance to Scott in the compilation of the *Border Minstrelsy*. Once, after a long convivial night in Edinburgh, he and Scott climbed to the top of Arthur's Seat in the moonlight, coming down to breakfast with a rare appetite.

The route by which "Marmion" is carried to Edinburgh was made the subject of good-natured banter by some of Scott's friends. "Why," said one of them, "did ever mortal coming from England to Edinburgh, go by Gifford, Crichton Castle, Borthwick Castle, and over the top of Blackford Hill? Not only is it in a circuitous *détour*, but there never was a road that way since the world was created." "That is a most irrelevant objection," replied Scott; "it was my good pleasure to bring Marmion by that route, for the purpose of describing the places you have mentioned, and the view from Blackford Hill—it was his business to find his road, and pick his steps the best way he could." In the poem, however, another reason is suggested for the route chosen:—

"They might not choose the lowland road.  
For the Merse forayers were abroad,  
Who, fired with hate and thirst of prey,  
Had scarcely failed to bar their way."

It was at the suggestion of the friend who offered the above criticism (Mr Guthrie Wright) that Scott took his hero back by Tantallon.



# M A R M I O N :



## INTRODUCTION TO CANTO FIRST.

TO WILLIAM STUART ROSE, ESQ.

*Ashestiel, Ettrick Forest.*

NOVEMBER's sky is chill and drear,  
November's leaf is red and sear :  
Late, gazing down the steepy linn,  
That hems our little garden in,  
Low in its dark and narrow glen,  
You scarce the rivulet might ken,  
So thick the tangled greenwood grew,  
So feeble trill'd the streamlet through :  
Now, murmuring hoarse, and frequent seen  
Through bush and brier, no longer green,  
An angry brook, it sweeps the glade,  
Brawls over rock and wild cascade,  
And, foaming brown with doubled speed,  
Hurries its waters to the Tweed.

No longer Autumn's glowing red  
Upon our Forest hills is shed ;  
No more, beneath the evening beam,  
Fair Tweed reflects their purple gleam :  
Away hath passed the heather-bell  
That bloom'd so rich on Needpath Fell ;  
Sallow his brow, and russet bare  
Are now the sister-heights of Yair.  
The sheep, before the pinching heaven,  
To shelter'd dale and down are driven,  
Where yet some faded herbage pines,  
And yet a watery sunbeam shines :



In meek despondency they eye  
The wither'd sward and wintry sky,  
And far beneath their summer hill,  
Stray sadly by Glenkinnon's rill :  
The shepherd shifts his mantle's fold,  
And wraps him closer from the cold ;  
His dogs no merry circles wheel,  
But, shivering, follow at his heel ;  
A cowering glance they often cast,  
As deeper moans the gathering blast.

My imps, though hardy, bold and wild,  
As best befits the mountain child,  
Feel the sad influence of the hour,  
And wail the daisy's vanished flower ;  
Their summer gambols tell, and mourn,  
And anxious ask, — Will spring return,  
And birds and lambs again be gay,  
And blossoms clothe the hawthorn spray ?

Yes, prattlers, yes. The daisy's flower  
Again shall paint your summer bower ;  
Again the hawthorn shall supply  
The garlands you delight to tie ;  
The lambs upon the lea shall bound,  
The wild birds carol to the round,  
And while you frolic light as they,  
Too short shall seem the summer day.

To mute and to material things  
New life revolving summer brings ;  
The genial call dead Nature hears,  
And in her glory reappears.  
But oh ! my Country's wintry state  
What second spring shall renovate ?  
What powerful call shall bid arise  
The buried warlike and the wise ;  
The mind that thought for Britain's weal,  
The hand that grasp'd the victor steel ?  
The vernal sun new life bestows  
Even on the meanest flower that blows ;  
But vainly, vainly may he shine,  
Where glory weeps o'er NELSON'S shrine ;

And vainly pierce the solemn gloom,  
That shrouds, O PITT, thy hallowed tomb !

Deep graved in every British heart,  
O never let those names depart !  
Say to your sons, — Lo, here his grave;  
Who victor died on Gadite wave ;<sup>1</sup>  
To him, as to the burning levin,  
Short, bright, resistless course was given.  
Where'er his country's foes were found,  
Was heard the fated thunder's sound,  
Till burst the bolt on yonder shore,  
Roll'd, blazed, destroy'd, — and was no more.

Nor mourn ye less his perish'd worth,  
Who bade the conqueror go forth,  
And launch'd that thunderbolt of war  
On Egypt, Hafnia,<sup>2</sup> Trafalgar ;  
Who, born to guide such high emprise,  
For Britain's weal was early wise ;  
Alas ! to whom the Almighty gave,  
For Britain's sins, an early grave !  
His worth, who, in his mightiest hour,  
A bauble held the pride of power,  
Spurn'd at the sordid lust of pelf,  
And served his Albion for herself ;  
Who, when the frantic crowd amain  
Strain'd at subjection's bursting rein,  
O'er their wild mood full conquest gain'd,  
The pride, he would not crush, restrain'd,  
Show'd their fierce zeal a worthier cause,  
And brought the freeman's arm, to aid the freeman's  
laws.

Had'st thou but lived, though stripp'd of power,  
A watchman on the lonely tower,  
Thy thrilling trump had roused the land,  
When fraud or danger were at hand ;  
By thee, as by the beacon-light,  
Our pilots had kept course aright ;  
As some proud column, though alone,  
Thy strength had propp'd the tottering throne :

<sup>1</sup> Nelson.

<sup>2</sup> Copenhagen.

Now is the stately column broke,  
The beacon-light is quench'd in smoke,  
The trumpet's silver sound is still,  
The warder silent on the hill!

Oh think, how to his latest day,  
When Death, just hovering, claim'd his prey,  
With Palinure's unalter'd mood,  
Firm at his dangerous post he stood;  
Each call for needful rest repell'd,  
With dying hand the rudder held,  
Till, in his fall, with fateful sway  
The steerage of the realm gave way!  
Then, while on Britain's thousand plains,  
One unpolluted church remains,  
Whose peaceful bells ne'er sent around  
The bloody tocsin's maddening sound,  
But still, upon the hallow'd day,  
Convoke the swains to praise and pray;  
While faith and civil peace are dear,  
Grace this cold marble with a tear, —  
He, who preserved them, PITT, lies here!

Nor yet suppress the generous sigh,  
Because his rival slumbers nigh;  
Nor be thy *requiescat* dumb,  
Lest it be said o'er Fox's tomb.  
For talents mourn, untimely lost,  
When best employ'd, and wanted most;  
Mourn genius high, and lore profound,  
And wit that loved to play, not wound;  
And all the reasoning powers divine,  
To penetrate, resolve, combine;  
And feelings keen, and fancy's glow, —  
They sleep with him who sleeps below:  
And, if thou mourn'st they could not save  
From error him who owns this grave,  
Be every harsher thought suppress'd,  
And sacred be the last long rest.  
*Here*, where the end of earthly things  
Lays heroes, patriots, bards, and kings;  
Where stiff the hand, and still the tongue,  
Of those who fought, and spoke, and sung;

*Here*, where the fretted aisles prolong  
 The distant notes of holy song,  
 As if some angel spoke agen,  
 "All peace on earth, good-will to men ;"  
 If ever from an English heart,  
 O, *here* let prejudice depart,  
 And, partial feeling cast aside,  
 Record, that Fox a Briton died !  
 When Europe crouch'd to France's yoke,  
 And Austria bent, and Prussia broke,  
 And the firm Russian's purpose brave,  
 Was barter'd by a timorous slave,  
 Even then dishonor's peace he spurn'd,  
 The sullied olive-branch return'd,  
 Stood for his country's glory fast,  
 And nail'd her colors to the mast !  
 Heaven, to reward his firmness, gave  
 A portion in this honor'd grave,  
 And ne'er held marble in its trust  
 Of two such wondrous men the dust.

With more than mortal powers endow'd,  
 How high they soar'd above the crowd !  
 Theirs was no common party race,  
 Jostling by dark intrigue for place ;  
 Like fabled Gods, their mighty war  
 Shook realms and nations in its jar ;  
 Beneath each banner proud to stand,  
 Look'd up the noblest of the land,  
 Till through the British world were known  
 The names of PITT and FOX alone.  
 Spells of such force no wizard grave  
 E'er framed in dark Thessalian cave,  
 Though his could drain the ocean dry,  
 And force the planets from the sky.  
 These spells are spent, and, spent with these,  
 The wine of life is on the lees.  
 Genius, and taste, and talent gone,  
 For ever tomb'd beneath the stone,  
 Where — taming thought to human pride ! —  
 The mighty chiefs sleep side by side.  
 Drop upon FOX's grave the tear,  
 'Twill trickle to his rival's bier ;

O'er PITT's the mournful requiem sound,  
And FOX's shall the notes rebound.  
The solemn echo seems to cry, —  
“ Here let their discord with them die.  
Speak not for those a separate doom,  
Whom Fate made Brothers in the tomb ;  
But search the land of living men,  
Where wilt thou find their like again ? ”

Rest, ardent Spirits ! till the cries  
Of dying Nature bid you rise ;  
Not even your Britain's groans can pierce  
The leaden silence of your hearse ;  
Then, O, how impotent and vain  
This grateful tributary strain !  
Though not unmark'd from northern clime,  
Ye heard the Border Minstrel's rhyme :  
His Gothic harp has o'er you rung ;  
The Bard you deign'd to praise, your deathless names  
has sung.

Stay yet, illusion, stay a while,  
My wilder'd fancy still beguile !  
From this high theme how can I part,  
Ere half unloaded is my heart !  
For all the tears e'er sorrow drew,  
And all the raptures fancy knew,  
And all the keener rush of blood,  
That throbs through bard in bard-like mood,  
Were here a tribute mean and low,  
Though all their mingled streams could flow —  
Woe, wonder, and sensation high,  
In one spring-tide of ecstasy ! —  
It will not be — it may not last —  
The vision of enchantment's past :  
Like frostwork in the morning ray,  
The fancied fabric melts away ;  
Each Gothic arch, memorial-stone,  
And long, dim, lofty aisle, are gone ;  
And lingering last, deception dear,  
The choir's high sounds die on my ear.  
Now slow return the lonely down,  
The silent pastures bleak and brown,

The farm begirt with copsewood wild,  
 The gambols of each frolic child,  
 Mixing their shrill cries with the tone  
 Of Tweed's dark waters rushing on.

Prompt on unequal tasks to run,  
 Thus Nature disciplines her son :  
 Meeter, she says, for me to stray,  
 And waste the solitary day,  
 In plucking from yon fen the reed,  
 And watch it floating down the Tweed ;  
 Or idly list the shrilling lay,  
 With which the milkmaid cheers her way,  
 Marking its cadence rise and fall,  
 As from the field, beneath her pail,  
 She trips it down the uneven dale :  
 Meeter for me, by yonder cairn,  
 The ancient shepherd's tale to learn ;  
 Though oft he stop in rustic fear,  
 Lest his old legends tire the ear  
 Of one, who, in his simple mind,  
 May boast of book-learn'd taste refined.

But thou, my friend, canst fitly tell,  
 (For few have read romance so well,)  
 How still the legendary lay  
 O'er poet's bosom holds its sway ;  
 How on the ancient minstrel strain  
 Time lays his palsied hand in vain ;  
 And how our hearts at doughty deeds,  
 By warriors wrought in steely weeds,  
 Still throb for fear and pity's sake ;  
 As when the Champion of the Lake  
 Enters Morgana's fated house,  
 Or in the Chapel Perilous,  
 Despising spells and demons' force,  
 Holds converse with the unburied corse ;  
 Or when, Dame Ganore's grace to move,  
 (Alas, that lawless was their love !)  
 He sought proud Tarquin in his den,  
 And freed full sixty knights ; or when,  
 A sinful man, and unconfess'd,  
 He took the Sangreal's holy quest,

And, slumbering, saw the vision high,  
He might not view with waking eye.

The mightiest chiefs of British song  
Scorn'd not such legends to prolong :  
They gleam through Spenser's elfin dream,  
And mix in Milton's heavenly theme ;  
And Dryden, in immortal strain,  
Had raised the Table Round again,  
But that a ribald King and Court  
Bade him toil on, to make them sport ;  
Demanded for their niggard pay,  
Fit for their souls, a looser lay,  
Licentious satire, song, and play ;  
The world defrauded of the high design,  
Profaned the God-given strength, and marr'd the lofty  
line.

Warm'd by such names, well may we then,  
Though dwindled sons of little men,  
Essay to break a feeble lance  
In the fair fields of old romance ;  
Or seek the moated castle's cell,  
Where long through talisman and spell,  
While tyrants ruled, and damsels wept,  
Thy Genius, Chivalry, hath slept :  
There sound the harpings of the North,  
Till he awake and sally forth,  
On venturous quest to prick again,  
In all his arms, with all his train,  
Shield, lance, and brand, and plume, and scarf,  
Fay, giant, dragon, squire, and dwarf,  
And wizard with his wand of might,  
And errant maid on palfrey white.  
Around the Genius weave their spells,  
Pure Love, who scarce his passion tells ;  
Mystery, half veil'd and half reveal'd ;  
And Honor, with his spotless shield ;  
Attention, with fix'd eye ; and Fear,  
That loves the tale she shrinks to hear ;  
And gentle Courtesy ; and Faith,  
Unchanged by sufferings, time, or death ;  
And Valor, lion-mettled lord,  
Leaning upon his own good sword.



Well has thy fair achievement shown,  
 A worthy meed may thus be won ;  
 Ytene's<sup>1</sup> oaks — beneath whose shade  
 Their theme the merry minstrels made,  
 Of Aspacart, and Bevis bold,  
 And that Red King,<sup>2</sup> who, while of old,  
 Through Boldrewood the chase he led,  
 By his lov'd huntsman's arrow bled —  
 Ytene's oaks have heard again  
 Renew'd such legendary strain ;  
 For thou hast sung how He of Gaul,  
 That Amadis so famed in hall,  
 For Oriana, foil'd in fight  
 The Necromancer's felon might ;  
 And well in modern verse hast wove  
 Partenopex's mystic love :  
 Hear, then, attentive to my lay,  
 A knightly tale of Albion's elder day.

## CANTO FIRST.

## THE CASTLE.

## I.

DAY set on Norham's castled steep,  
 And Tweed's fair river, broad and deep,  
 And Cheviot's mountains lone :  
 The battled towers, the donjon keep,  
 The loophole grates, where captives weep,  
 The flanking walls that round it sweep,  
 In yellow lustre shone.  
 The warriors on the turrets high,  
 Moving athwart the evening sky,  
 Seem'd forms of giant height :  
 Their armor, as it caught the rays,  
 Flash'd back again the western blaze,  
 In lines of dazzling light.

<sup>1</sup> The New Forest in Hampshire, anciently so called.

<sup>2</sup> William Rufus.

## II.

Saint George's banner, broad and gay,  
 Now faded, as the fading ray  
     Less bright, and less, was flung ;  
 The evening gale had scarce the power  
 To wave it on the Donjon Tower,  
     So heavily it hung.  
 The scouts had parted on their search,  
     The Castle gates were barr'd ;  
 Above the gloomy portal arch, -  
 Timing his footsteps to a march,  
     The Warder kept his guard ;  
 Low humming, as he paced along,  
 Some ancient Border gathering song.

## III.

A distant trampling sound he hears ;  
 He looks abroad and soon appears,  
 O'er Horncliff-hill a plump<sup>1</sup> of spears,  
     Beneath a pennon gay ;  
 A horseman, darting from the crowd,  
 Like lightning from a summer cloud,  
 Spurs on his mettled courser proud,  
     Before the dark array.  
 Beneath the sable palisade,  
 That closed the Castle barricade,  
     His bugle-horn he blew ;  
 The warder hasted from the wall,  
 And warn'd the Captain in the hall,  
     For well the blast he knew ;  
 And joyfully that knight did call,  
 To sewer, squire, and seneschal.

## IV.

"Now broach ye a pipe of Malvoisie,  
 Bring pasties of the doe,

<sup>1</sup> This word properly applies to a flight of water-fowl ; but is applied, by analogy, to a body of horse : —

"There is a knight of the North Country,  
 Which leads a lusty *plump* of spears." —

*Flodden Field.*

And quickly make the entrance free,  
And bid my heralds ready be,  
And every minstrel sound his glee,  
And all our trumpets blow ;  
And, from the platform, spare ye not  
To fire a noble salvo-shot ;  
Lord MARMION waits below ! ”  
Then to the Castle's lower ward  
Sped forty yeomen tall,  
The iron-studded gates unbarr'd,  
Raised the portcullis' ponderous guard,  
The lofty palisade unsparr'd,  
And let the drawbridge fall. \*

## V.

Along the bridge Lord Marmion rode,  
Proudly his red-roan charger trode,  
His helm hung at the saddlebow ;  
Well by his visage you might know  
He was a stalworth knight, and keen,  
And had in many a battle been ;  
The scar on his brown cheek reveal'd  
A token true of Bosworth field ;  
His eyebrow dark, and eye of fire,  
Show'd spirit proud, and prompt to ire ;  
Yet lines of thought upon his cheek  
Did deep design and counsel speak.  
His forehead, by his casque worn bare,  
His thick mustache, and curly hair,  
Coal black, and grizzled here and there,  
But more through toil than age ;  
His square-turn'd joints, and strength of limb,  
Show'd him no carpet knight so trim,  
But in close fight a champion grim,  
In camps a leader sage.

## VI.

Well was he armed from head to heel,  
In mail and plate of Milan steel ;  
But his strong helm, of mighty cost,  
Was all with burnish'd gold emboss'd ;

Amid the plumage of the crest,  
 A falcon hover'd on her nest,  
 With wings outspread, and forward breast :  
 E'en such a falcon, on his shield,  
 Soar'd sable in an azure field :  
 The golden legend bore aright,  
~~Who checks at me, to death is dight.~~  
 Blue was the charger's broider'd rein ;  
 Blue ribbons deck'd his arching mane ;  
 The knightly housing's ample fold  
 Was velvet blue, and trapp'd with gold.

## VII.

Behind him rode two gallant squires,  
 Of noble name, and knightly sires ;  
 They burn'd the gilded spurs to claim ;  
 For well could each a war-horse tame,  
 Could draw the bow, the sword could sway,  
 And lightly bear the ring away ;  
 Nor less with courteous precepts stored,  
 Could dance in hall, and carve at board,  
 And frame love-ditties passing rare,  
 And sing them to a lady fair.

## VIII.

Four men-at-arms came at their backs,  
 With halbert, bill, and battle-axe :  
 They bore Lord Marmion's lance so strong,  
 And led his sumpter-mules along,  
 And ambling palfrey, when at need  
 Him listed ease his battle-steed.  
 The last and trustiest of the four,  
 On high his forky pennon bore :  
 Like swallow's tail, in shape and hue,  
 Flutter'd the streamer glossy blue,  
 Where, blazon'd sable, as before,  
 The towering falcon seem'd to soar.  
 Last, twenty yeomen, two and two,  
 In hosen black, and jerkins blue,  
 With falcons broider'd on each breast,  
 Attended on their lord's behest :

Each, chosen for an archer good,  
Knew hunting-craft by lake or wood ;  
Each one a six-foot bow could bend,  
And far a cloth-yard shaft could send ;  
Each held a boar-spear tough and strong,  
And at their belts their quivers rung.  
Their dusty palfreys, and array,  
Show'd they had march'd a weary way.

## IX.

'Tis meet that I should tell you now,  
How fairly arm'd, and order'd how,  
The soldiers of the guard,  
With musket, pike, and morion,  
To welcome noble Marmion,  
Stood in the Castle-yard ;  
Minstrels and trumpeters were there,  
The gunner held his linstock yare,  
For welcome-shot prepared :  
Enter'd the train, and such a clang,  
As then through all the turrets rang,  
Old Norham never heard.

## X.

The guards their morrice-pikes advanced,  
The trumpets flourish'd brave,  
The cannon from the ramparts glanced,  
And thundering welcome gave.  
A blithe salute, in martial sort,  
The minstrels well might sound,  
For, as Lord Marmion cross'd the court,  
He scatter'd angels round.  
"Welcome to Norham, Marmion !  
Stout heart, and open hand !  
Well dost thou brook thy gallant roan,  
Thou flower of English land !"

## XI.

Two pursuivants, whom tabarts deck,  
With silver scutcheon round their neck,  
Stood on the steps of stone,  
By which you reach the donjon gate,

And there, with herald pomp and state,  
They hail'd Lord Marmion :  
They hail'd him Lord of Fontenaye,  
Of Lutterward, and Scrivelbaye,  
Of Tamworth tower and town ;  
And he, their courtesy to requite,  
Gave them a chain of twelve marks weight,  
All as he lighted down.  
“ Now largesse, largesse,<sup>1</sup> Lord Marmion,  
Knight of the crest of gold !  
A blazon'd shield, in battle won,  
Ne'er guarded heart so bold.”

## XII.

They marshal'd him to the Castle-hall,  
Where the guests stood all aside,  
And loudly flourish'd the trumpet-call,  
And the heralds loudly cried, —  
“ Room, lordlings, room for Lord Marmion,  
With the crest and helm of gold !  
Full well we know the trophies won  
In the lists at Cottiswold :  
There, vainly Ralph de Wilton strove  
'Gainst Marmion's force to stand ;  
To him he lost his lady-love,  
And to the King his land.  
Ourselves beheld the listed field,  
A sight both sad and fair ;  
We saw Lord Marmion pierce his shield,  
And saw his saddle bare ;  
We saw the victor win the crest  
He wears with worthy pride ;  
And on the gibbet-tree, reversed,  
His foeman's scutcheon tied.  
Place, nobles, for the Falcon-Knight !  
Room, room, ye gentles gay,  
For him who conquer'd in the right,  
Marmion of Fontenaye ! ”

<sup>1</sup> The cry with which heralds and pursuivants were wont to acknowledge the bounty received from the knights.

## XIII.

Then stepp'd to meet that noble Lord,  
 Sir Hugh the Heron bold,  
 Baron of Twisell, and of Ford,  
 And Captain of the Hold.  
 He led Lord Marmion to the deas,  
 Raised o'er the pavement high,  
 And placed him in the upper place —  
 They feasted full and high :  
 The whiles a Northern harper rude  
 Chanted a rhyme of deadly feud,  
*"How the fierce Thirwalls, and Ridleys all,  
 Stout Willimondswick,  
 And Hardriding Dick,  
 And Hughie of Hawdon, and Will o' the Wall,  
 Have set on Sir Albany Featherstonhaugh,  
 And taken his life at the Deadman's shaw."*  
 Scantly Lord Marmion's ear could brook  
 The harper's barbarous lay ;  
 Yet much he praised the pains he took,  
 And well those pains did pay :  
 For lady's suit and minstrel's strain,  
 By knight should ne'er be heard in vain.

## XIV.

"Now, good Lord Marmion," Heron says,  
 "Of your fair courtesy,  
 I pray you bide some little space,  
 In this poor tower with me.  
 Here may you keep your arms from rust,  
 May breathe your war-horse well ;  
 Seldom hath pass'd a week but giust  
 Or feat of arms befell :  
 The Scots can rein a mettled steed,  
 And love to couch a spear ; —  
 St. George ! a stirring life they lead,  
 That have such neighbors near.  
 Then stay with us a little space,  
 Our northern wars to learn ;  
 I pray you for your lady's grace !"  
 Lord Marmion's brow grew stern.



## XV.

The Captain mark'd his alter'd look,  
And gave a squire the sign ;  
A mighty wassel-bowl he took,  
And crown'd it high with wine.  
" Now pledge me here, Lord Marmion :  
But first I pray thee fair,  
Where hast thou left that page of thine,  
That used to serve thy cup of wine,  
Whose beauty was so rare ?  
When last in Raby towers we met,  
The boy I closely eyed,  
And often mark'd his cheeks were wet,  
With tears he fain would hide :  
His was no rugged horse-boy's hand,  
To burnish shield or sharpen brand,  
Or saddle battle-steed ;  
But meeter seem'd for lady fair,  
To fan her cheek or curl her hair,  
Or through embroidery, rich and rare,  
The slender silk to lead :  
His skin was fair, his ringlets gold,  
His bosom — when he sigh'd,  
The russet doublet's rugged fold  
Could scarce repel its pride !  
Say, hast thou given that lovely youth  
To serve in lady's bower ?  
Or was the gentle page, in sooth,  
A gentle paramour ? "

## XVI.

Lord Marmion ill could brook such jest ;  
He roll'd his kindling eye,  
With pain his rising wrath suppress'd,  
Yet made a calm reply :  
" That boy thou thought'st so goodly fair,  
He might not brook the northern air.  
More of his fate if thou wouldst learn,  
I left him sick in Lindisfarn :  
Enough of him. — But, Heron, say,  
Why does thy lovely lady gay  
Disdain to grace the hall to-day ?

Or has that dame, so fair and sage,  
Gone on some pious pilgrimage?" —  
He spoke in covert scorn, for fame  
Whisper'd light tales of Heron's dame.

## XVII.

Unmark'd, at least unreck'd, the taunt,  
Careless the Knight replied,  
"No bird, whose feathers gaily flaunt,  
Delights in cage to bide :  
Norham is grim and grated close,  
Hemm'd in by battlement and fosse,  
And many a darksome tower ;  
And better loves my lady bright  
To sit in liberty and light,  
In fair Queen Margaret's bower.  
We hold our greyhound in our hand,  
Our falcon on our glove ;  
But where shall we find leash or band,  
For dame that loves to rove ?  
Let the wild falcon soar her swing,  
She'll stoop when she has tired her wing." —

## XVIII.

"Nay, if with royal James's bride  
The lovely Lady Heron bide,  
Behold me here a messenger,  
Your tender greetings prompt to bear ;  
For, to the Scottish court address'd,  
I journey at our King's behest,  
And pray you, of your grace, provide  
For me and mine, a trusty guide.  
I have not ridden in Scotland since  
James back'd the cause of that mock prince,  
Warbeck, that Flemish counterfeit,  
Who on the gibbet paid the cheat.  
Then did I march with Surrey's power,  
What time we razed old Ayton Tower." —

## XIX.

"For such-like need, my lord, I trow,  
Norham can find you guides enow ;  
For here be some have prick'd as far  
On Scottish ground, as to Dunbar ;

Have drunk the monks of St. Bothan's ale,  
And driven the beeves of Lauderdale;  
Harried the wives of Greenlaw's goods,  
And given them light to set their hoods." —

## XX.

"Now, in good sooth," Lord Marmion cried,  
"Were I in warlike wise to ride,  
A better guard I would not lack,  
Than your stout forayers at my back;  
But, as in form of peace I go,  
A friendly messenger, to know,  
Why through all Scotland, near and far,  
Their King is mustering troops for war,  
The sight of plundering Border spears  
Might justify suspicious fears,  
And deadly feud, or thirst of spoil,  
Break out in some unseemly broil:  
A herald were my fitting guide;  
Or friar, sworn in peace to bide;  
Or pardoner, or travelling priest,  
Or strolling pilgrim, at the least."

## XXI.

The Captain mused a little space,  
And pass'd his hand across his face. —  
"Fain would I find the guide you want,  
But ill may spare a pursuivant,  
The only men that safe can ride  
Mine errands on the Scottish side:  
And though a bishop built this fort,  
Few holy brethren here resort;  
Even our good chaplain, as I ween,  
Since our last siege we have not seen:  
The mass he might not sing or say,  
Upon one stinted meal a-day;  
So, safe he sat in Durham aisle,  
And pray'd for our success the while.  
Our Norham vicar, woe betide,  
Is all too well in case to ride;  
The priest of Shoreswood — he could rein  
The wildest war-horse in your train;

But then, no spearman in the hall  
Will sooner swear, or stab, or brawl.  
Friar John of Tillmouth were the man  
A blithesome brother at the can,  
A welcome guest in hall and bower,  
He knows each castle, town, and tower,  
In which the wine and ale is good,  
'Twixt Newcastle and Holy-Rood.  
But that good man, as ill befalls,  
Hath seldom left our castle walls,  
Since, on the vigil of St. Bede,  
In evil hour, he cross'd the Tweed,  
To teach Dame Alison her creed.  
Old Bughtrig found him with his wife ;  
And John, an enemy to strife,  
Sans frock and hood, fled for his life.  
The jealous churl hath deeply swore,  
That, if again he venture o'er,  
He shall shrieve penitent no more.  
Little he loves such risks, I know ;  
Yet, in your guard, perchance will go."

## XXII.

Young Selby, at the fair hall-board,  
Carved to his uncle and that lord,  
And reverently took up the word. —  
" Kind uncle, woe were we each one,  
If harm should hap to brother John.  
He is a man of mirthful speech,  
Can many a game and gambol teach ;  
Full well at tables can he play,  
And sweep at bowls the stake away.  
None can a lustier carol bawl,  
The needfulest among us all,  
When time hangs heavy in the hall,  
And snow comes thick at Christmas tide,  
And we can neither hunt, nor ride  
A foray on the Scottish side.  
The vow'd revenge of Bughtrig rude,  
May end in worse than loss of hood.  
Let Friar John, in safety, still  
In chimney-corner snore his fill,  
Roast hissing crabs, or flagons swill:

Last night, to Norham there came one,  
Will better guide Lord Marmion." —  
"Nephew," quoth Heron, "by my fay,  
Well hast thou spoke; say forth thy say." —

## XXIII.

"Here is a holy Palmer come,  
From Salem first, and last from Rome:  
One, that hath kiss'd the blessed tomb,  
And visited each holy shrine,  
In Araby and Palestine;  
On hills of Armenie hath been,  
Where Noah's ark may yet be seen;  
By that Red Sea, too, hath he trod,  
Which parted at the prophet's rod;  
In Sinai's wilderness he saw  
The Mount, where Israel heard the law,  
'Mid thunder-dint and flashing levin,  
And shadows, mists, and darkness, given.  
He shows St. James's cockle-shell;  
Of fair Montserrat, too, can tell;  
And of that Grot where Olives nod,  
Where, darling of each heart and eye,  
From all the youth of Sicily,  
Saint Rosalie retired to God.

## XXIV.

"To stout Saint George of Norwich merry,  
Saint Thomas, too, of Canterbury,  
Cuthbert of Durham and Saint Bede,  
For his sins' pardon hath he pray'd.  
He knows the passes of the North,  
And seeks far shrines beyond the Forth;  
Little he eats, and long will wake,  
And drinks but of the stream or lake.  
This were a guide o'er moor and dale;  
But, when our John hath quaff'd his ale,  
As little as the wind that blows,  
And warms itself against his nose,  
Kens he, or cares, which way he goes." —

## XXV.

“Gramercy!” quoth Lord Marmion,  
“Full loath were I that Friar John,  
That venerable man, for me  
Were placed in fear or jeopardy.  
If this same Palmer will me lead  
From hence to Holy-Rood,  
Like his good saint, I’ll pay his meed,  
Instead of cockle-shell or bead,  
With angels fair and good.  
I love such holy rambles; still  
They know to charm a weary hill,  
With song, romance, or lay:  
Some jovial tale, or glee, or jest,  
Some lying legend, at the least,  
They bring to cheer the way.” —

## XXVI.

“Ah! noble sir,” young Selby said,  
And finger on his lip he laid,  
“This man knows much — perchance e’en more  
Than he could learn by holy lore.  
Still to himself he’s muttering,  
And shrinks as at some unseen thing.  
Last night we listen’d at his cell;  
Strange sounds we heard, and, sooth to tell,  
He murmur’d on till morn, howe’er,  
No living mortal could be near.  
Sometimes I thought I heard it plain,  
As other voices spoke again.  
I cannot tell — I like it not —  
Friar John hath told us it is wrote,  
No conscience clear, and void of wrong,  
Can rest awake, and pray so long.  
Himself still sleeps before his beads  
Have mark’d ten aves, and two creeds.” —

## XXVII.

“Let pass,” quoth Marmion; “by my fay,  
This man shall guide me on my way,  
Although the great arch-fiend and he  
Had sworn themselves of company.

So please you, gentle youth, to call  
 This Palmer to the Castle-hall."  
 The summon'd Palmer came in place ;  
 His sable cowl o'erhung his face ;  
 In his black mantle was he clad,  
 With Peter's keys, in cloth of red,  
     On his broad shoulders wrought ;  
 The scallop-shell his cap did deck ;  
 The crucifix around his neck  
     Was from Loretto brought ;  
 His sandals were with travel tore,  
 Staff, budget, bottle, scrip, he wore ;  
 The faded palm-branch in his hand  
 Show'd pilgrim from the Holy Land.

## XXVIII.

When as the Palmer came in hall,  
 Nor lord, nor knight, was there more tall,  
 Or had a statelier step withal,  
     Or look'd more high and keen ;  
 For no saluting did he wait,  
 But strode across the hall of state,  
 And fronted Marmion where he sate,  
     As he his peer had been.  
 But his gaunt frame was worn with toil ;  
 His cheek was sunk, alas the while !  
 And when he struggled at a smile,  
     His eye look'd haggard wild :  
 Poor wretch ! the mother that him bare,  
 If she had been in presence there,  
 In his wan face, and sun-burn'd hair,  
     She had not known her child.  
 Danger, long travel, want, or woe,  
 Soon change the form that best we know —  
 For deadly fear can time outgo,  
     And blanch at once the hair ;  
 Hard toil can roughen form and face,  
 And want can quench the eye's bright grace,  
 Nor does old age a wrinkle trace  
     More deeply than despair.  
 Happy whom none of these befall,  
 But this poor Palmer knew them all.



## XXIX.

Lord Marmion then his boon did ask ;  
The Palmer took on him the task,  
So he would march with morning tide,  
To Scottish court to be his guide.  
“ But I have solemn vows to pay,  
And may not linger by the way,  
To fair St. Andrews bound,  
Within the ocean-cave to pray,  
Where good Saint Rule his holy lay,  
From midnight to the dawn of day,  
Sung to the billows’ sound ;  
Thence to Saint Fillan’s blessed well,  
Whose spring can frenzied dreams dispel,  
And the crazed brain restore :  
Saint Mary grant, that cave or spring  
Could back to peace my bosom bring,  
Or bid it throb no more ! ”

## XXX.

And now the midnight draught of sleep,  
Where wine and spices richly steep,  
In massive bowl of silver deep,  
The page presents on knee.  
Lord Marmion drank a fair good rest,  
The Captain pledged his noble guest,  
The cup went through among the rest,  
Who drained it merrily ;  
Alone the Palmer pass’d it by,  
Though Selby press’d him courteously.  
This was a sign the feast was o’er ;  
It hush’d the merry wassel roar,  
The minstrels ceased to sound.  
Soon in the castle nought was heard,  
But the slow footstep of the guard,  
Pacing his sober round.

## XXXI.

With early dawn Lord Marmion rose :  
And first the chapel doors unclosed :  
Then, after morning rites were done,  
(A hasty mass from Friar John,)  
And knight and squire had broke their fast

On rich substantial repast,  
 Lord Marmion's bugles blew to horse :  
 Then came the stirrup-cup in course :  
 Between the Baron and his host,  
 No point of courtesy was lost ;  
 High thanks were by Lord Marmion paid,  
 Solemn excuse the Captain made,  
 Till, filing from the gate, had pass'd  
 That noble train, their Lord the last.  
 Then loudly rung the trumpet call ;  
 Thunder'd the cannon from the wall,  
     And shook the Scottish shore :  
 Around the castle eddied slow,  
 Volumes of smoke as white as snow,  
     And hid its turrets hoar ;  
 Till they roll'd forth upon the air,  
 And met the river breezes there,  
 Which gave again the prospect fair.

## INTRODUCTION TO CANTO SECOND.

TO THE REV. JOHN MARRIOTT, A.M.

*Ashestiel, Ettrick Forest.*

THE scenes are desert now, and bare,  
 Where flourish'd once a forest fair,  
 When these waste glens with copse were lined,  
 And peopled with the hart and hind.  
 Yon Thorn — perchance whose prickly spears  
 Have fenced him for three hundred years,  
 While fell around his green compeers —  
 Yon lonely Thorn, would he could tell  
 The changes of his parent dell,  
 Since he, so gray and stubborn now,  
 Waved in each breeze a sapling bough :  
 Would he could tell how deep the shade  
 A thousand mingled branches made ;  
 How broad the shadows of the oak,  
 How clung the rowan<sup>1</sup> to the rock,  
 And through the foliage show'd his head,

<sup>1</sup> Mountain-ash.

With narrow leaves and berries red;  
 What pines on every mountain sprung,  
 O'er every dell what birches hung,  
 In every breeze what aspens shook,  
 What alders shaded every brook!

"Here, in my shade," methinks he'd say,  
 "The mighty stag at noontide lay:  
 The wolf I've seen, a fiercer game,  
 (The neighboring dingle bears his name,)  
 With lurching step around me prowls,  
 And stop, against the moon to howl;  
 The mountain-boar, on battle set,  
 His tusks upon my stem would whet;  
 While doe, and roe, and red-deer good,  
 Have bounded by, through gay green-wood.  
 Then oft, from Newark's riven tower,  
 Sallied a Scottish monarch's power:  
 A thousand vassals muster'd round,  
 With horse, and hawk, and horn, and hound;  
 And I might see the youth intent,  
 Guard every pass with crossbow bent;  
 And through the break the rangers stalk,  
 And falcn'ers hold the ready hawk;  
 And foresters in green-wood trim,  
 Lead in the leash the gazehounds grim,  
 Attentive as the bratchet's<sup>1</sup> bay,  
 From the dark covert drove the prey,  
 To slip them as he broke away.  
 The startled quarry bounds amain,  
 As fast the gallant greyhounds strain;  
 Whistles the arrow from the bow,  
 Answers the harquebuss below;  
 While all the rocking hills reply,  
 To hoof-clang, bound, and hunters' cry,  
 And bugles ringing lightsomely."

Of such proud huntings, many tales  
 Yet linger in our lonely dales,  
 Up pathless Ettrick and on Yarrow,  
 Where erst the outlaw drew his arrow.  
 But not more blithe that sylvan court,

<sup>1</sup> Slowhound.

Than we have been at humbler sport ;  
Though small our pomp and mean our game,  
Our mirth, dear Marriott, was the same.  
Remember'st thou my greyhounds true ?  
O'er holt or hill there never flew,  
From slip or leash there never sprang,  
More fleet of foot, or sure of fang.  
Nor dull, between each merry chase,  
Pass'd by the intermitted space ;  
For we had fair resource in store,  
In Classic and in Gothic lore :  
We mark'd each memorable scene,  
And held poetic talk between ;  
Nor hill, nor brook, we paced along,  
But had its legend or its song.  
All silent now — for now are still  
Thy bowers, untenanted Bowhill !<sup>1</sup>  
No longer, from thy mountains dun,  
The yeoman hears the well-known gun,  
And while his honest heart glows warm,  
At thought of his paternal farm,  
Round to his mates a brimmer fills,  
And drinks, "The Chieftain of the Hills !"   
No fairy forms, in Yarrow's bowers,  
Trip o'er the walks or tend the flowers,  
Fair as the elves whom Janet saw  
By moonlight dance on Carterhaugh ;  
No youthful Baron's left to grace  
The Forest-Sheriff's lonely chase,  
And ape, in manly step and tone,  
The majesty of Oberon :  
And she is gone, whose lovely face  
Is but her least and lowest grace ;  
Though if to Sylphid Queen 'twere given  
To show our earth the charms of Heaven,  
She could not glide along the air,  
With form more light, or face more fair.  
No more the widow's deafen'd ear  
Grows quick that lady's step to hear :  
At noontide she expects her not,  
Nor busies her to trim the cot :

<sup>1</sup> A seat of the Duke of Buccleuch in Ettrick Forest.

Pensive she turns her humming wheel,  
 Or pensive cooks her orphans' meal ;  
 Yet blesses, ere she deals their bread,  
 The gentle hand by which they're fed.<sup>1</sup>

From Yair, — which hills so closely bind,  
 Scarce can the Tweed his passage find,  
 Though much he fret, and chafe, and toil,  
 Till all his eddying currents boil, —  
 Her long-descended lord is gone,  
 And left us by the stream alone.  
 And much I miss those sportive boys,  
 Companions of my mountain joys,  
 Just at the age 'twixt boy and youth,  
 When thought is speech, and speech is truth.  
 Close to my side, with what delight  
 They press'd to hear of Wallace wight,  
 When, pointing to his airy mound,  
 I call'd his ramparts holy ground !<sup>2</sup>  
 Kindled their brows to hear me speak ;  
 And I have smiled, to feel my cheek,  
 Despite the difference of our years,  
 Return again the glow of theirs.  
 Ah, happy boys ! such feelings pure,  
 They will not, cannot, long endure ;  
 Condemn'd to stem the world's rude tide,  
 You may not linger by the side ;  
 For Fate shall thrust you from the shore,  
 And Passion ply the sail and oar.  
 Yet cherish the remembrance still,  
 Of the lone mountain, and the rill ;  
 For trust, dear boys, the time will come,  
 When fiercer transport shall be dumb,  
 And you will think right frequently,  
 But, well I hope, without a sigh,  
 On the free hours that we have spent  
 Together, on the brown hill's bent.

<sup>1</sup> Harriet, Duchess of Buccleuch, and mother of the present Duke, was at the date of the poem Countess of Dalkeith. She was much given to works of charity, and spent a great deal of time when she resided at Bowood in visiting the poor of the neighborhood.

<sup>2</sup> On a high mountainous ridge above the farm of Ashestiel is a fosse called Wallace's Trench.

When, musing on companions gone,  
We doubly feel ourselves alone,  
Something, my friend, we yet may gain ;  
There is a pleasure in this pain :  
It soothes the love of lonely rest,  
Deep in each gentler heart impress'd.  
'Tis silent amid worldly toils,  
And stifled soon by mental broils ;  
But, in a bosom thus prepared,  
Its still small voice is often heard,  
Whispering a mingled sentiment,  
'Twixt resignation and content.  
Oft in my mind such thoughts awake,  
By lone St. Mary's silent lake ;  
Thou know'st it well, — nor fen, nor sedge,  
Pollute the pure lake's crystal edge ;  
Abrupt and sheer, the mountains sink  
At once upon the level brink ;  
And just a trace of silver sand  
Marks where the water meets the land.  
Far in the mirror, bright and blue,  
Each hill's huge outline you may view ;  
Shaggy with heath, but lonely bare,  
Nor tree, nor bush, nor brake, is there,  
Save where, of land, yon slender line  
Bears thwart the lake the scatter'd pine.  
Yet even this nakedness has power,  
And aids the feeling of the hour :  
Nor thicket, dell, nor copse you spy,  
Where living thing concealed might lie ;  
Nor point, retiring, hides a dell,  
Where swain, or woodman lone, might dwell ;  
There's nothing left to fancy's guess,  
You see that all is loneliness :  
And silence aids — though the steep hills  
Send to the lake a thousand rills ;  
In summer tide, so soft they weep,  
The sound but lulls the ear asleep ;  
Your horse's hoof-tread sounds too rude,  
So stilly is the solitude.

Nought living meets the eye or ear,  
But well I ween the dead are near ;

For though, in feudal strife, a foe  
 Hath lain Our Lady's chapel low,  
 Yet still, beneath the hallow'd soil,  
 The peasant rests him from his toil,  
 And, dying, bids his bones be laid,  
 Where erst his simple fathers pray'd.

If age had tamed the passions' strife,  
 And fate had cut my ties to life,  
 Here, have I thought 'twere sweet to dwell,  
 And rear again the chaplain's cell,  
 Like that same peaceful hermitage,  
 Where Milton long'd to spend his age.  
 'Twere sweet to mark the setting day  
 On Bourhope's lonely top decay ;  
 And, as it faint and feeble died  
 On the broad lake, and mountain's side,  
 To say, " Thus pleasures fade away ;  
 Youth, talents, beauty, thus decay,  
 And leaves us dark, forlorn, and gray ; "  
 Then gaze on Dryhope's ruin'd tower,  
 And think on Yarrow's faded flower :  
 And when that mountain-sound I heard,  
 Which bids us be for storm prepared,  
 The distant rustling of his wings,  
 As up his force the Tempest brings,  
 'Twere sweet, ere yet his terrors rave,  
 To sit upon the Wizard's grave —  
 That Wizard-Priest's, whose bones are thrust  
 From company of holy dust ;  
 On which no sunbeam ever shines —  
 (So superstition's creed divines) —  
 Thence view the lake, with sullen roar,  
 Heave her broad billows to the shore ;  
 And mark the wild swans mount the gale,  
 Spread wide through mist their snowy sail,  
 And ever stoop again, to lave  
 Their bosoms on the surging wave :  
 Then, when against the driving hail  
 No longer might my plaid avail,  
 Back to my lonely home retire,  
 And light my lamp, and trim my fire ;



There ponder o'er some mystic lay,  
Till the wild tale had all its sway,  
And, in the bittern's distant shriek,  
I heard unearthly voices speak,  
And thought the Wizard-Priest was come,  
To claim again his ancient home !  
And bade my busy fancy range,  
To frame him fitting shape and strange,  
Till from the task my brow I clear'd  
And smiled to think that I had fear'd.

But chief, 'twere sweet to think such life,  
(Though but escape from fortune's strife,)  
Something most matchless good and wise,  
A great and grateful sacrifice ;  
And deem each hour, to musing given,  
A step upon the road to heaven.

Yet him, whose heart is ill at ease,  
Such peaceful solitudes displease ;  
He loves to drown his bosom's jar  
Amid the elemental war :  
And my black Palmer's choice had been  
Some ruder and more savage scene,  
Like that which frowns round dark Loch-skene.  
There eagles scream from isle to shore ;  
Down all the rocks the torrents roar ;  
O'er the black waves incessant driven,  
Dark mists infect the summer heaven ;  
Through the rude barriers of the lake  
Away its hurrying waters break,  
Faster and whiter dash and curl,  
Till down yon dark abyss they hurl.  
Rises the fog-smoke white as snow,  
Thunders the viewless stream below,  
Diving, as if condemn'd to lave  
Some demon's subterranean cave,  
Who, prison'd by enchanter's spell,  
Shakes the dark rock with groan and yell.  
And well that Palmer's form and mien  
Had suited with the stormy scene,  
Just on the edge, straining his ken  
To view the bottom of the den,

Where, deep deep down, and far within,  
 Toils with the rocks the roaring linn;  
 Then, issuing forth one foamy wave,  
 And wheeling round the Giant's Grave,  
 White as the snowy charger's tail  
 Drives down the pass of Moffatdale.

Marriott, thy harp, on Isis strung,  
 To many a Border theme has rung:  
 Then list to me, and thou shalt know  
 Of this mysterious Man of Woe.

## CANTO SECOND.

## THE CONVENT.

## I.

THE breeze, which swept away the smoke,  
 Round Norham Castle roll'd,  
 When all the loud artillery spoke,  
 With lightning-flash and thunder stroke,  
 As Marmion left the Hold.  
 It curl'd not Tweed alone, that breeze,  
 For, far upon Northumbrian seas,  
 It freshly blew, and strong,  
 Where from high Whitby's cloister'd pile,  
 Bound to St. Cuthbert's Holy Isle,  
 It bore a bark along.  
 Upon the gale she stoop'd her side,  
 And bounded o'er the swelling tide,  
 As she were dancing home;  
 The merry seamen laugh'd, to see  
 Their gallant ship so lustily  
 Furrow the green sea-foam.  
 Much joy'd they in their honor'd freight;  
 For, on the deck, in chair of state,  
 The Abbess of Saint Hilda placed,  
 With five fair nuns, the galley graced.

## II.

'Twas sweet to see these holy maids,  
Like birds escaped to greenwood shades,  
Their first flight from the cage,  
How timid, and how curious too,  
For all to them was strange and new,  
And all the common sights they view,  
Their wonderment engage,  
One eyed the shrouds and swelling sail,  
With many a benedicite ;  
One at the rippling surge grew pale,  
And would for terror pray ;  
Then shriek'd, because the sea-dog, nigh,  
His round black head, and sparkling eye,  
Rear'd o'er the foaming spray ;  
And one would still adjust her veil,  
Disorder'd by the summer gale,  
Perchance lest some more worldly eye  
Her dedicated charms might spy ;  
Perchance, because such action graced  
Her fair-turn'd arm and slender waist.  
Light was each simple bosom there,  
Save two, who ill might pleasure share, —  
The Abbess, and the Novice Clare.

## III.

The Abbess was of noble blood,  
But early took the veil and hood,  
Ere upon life she cast a look,  
Or knew the world that she forsook.  
Fair too she was, and kind had been  
As she was fair, but ne'er had seen  
For her a timid lover sigh,  
Nor knew the influence of her eye.  
Love, to her ear, was but a name,  
Combined with vanity and shame ;  
Her hopes, her fears, her joys, were all  
Bounded within the cloister wall :  
The deadliest sin her mind could reach,  
Was of monastic rule the breach ;  
And her ambition's highest aim  
To emulate Saint Hilda's fame.

For this she gave her ample dower,  
To raise the convent's eastern tower ;  
For this, with carving rare and quaint,  
She deck'd the chapel of the saint,  
And gave the relic-shrine of cost,  
With ivory and gems emboss'd.  
The poor her Convent's bounty blest,  
The pilgrim in its halls found rest.

## IV.

Black was her garb, her rigid rule  
Reform'd on Benedictine school ;  
Her cheek was pale, her form was spare ;  
Vigils, and penitence austere,  
Had early quench'd the light of youth,  
But gentle was the dame, in sooth ;  
Though vain of her religious sway,  
She loved to see her maids obey ;  
Yet nothing stern was she in cell,  
And the nuns loved their Abbess well.  
Sad was this voyage to the dame ;  
Summon'd to Lindisfarne, she came,  
There, with Saint Cuthbert's Abbot old,  
And Tynemouth's Prioress, to hold  
A chapter of Saint Benedict,  
For inquisition stern and strict,  
On two apostates from the faith,  
And, if need were, to doom to death.

## V.

Nought say I here of Sister Clare,  
Save this, that she was young and fair ;  
As yet a novice unprofess'd,  
Lovely and gentle, but distress'd.  
She was betroth'd to one now dead,  
Or worse, who had dishonor'd fled.  
Her kinsmen bade her give her hand  
To one, who loved her for her land :  
Herself, almost heart-broken now,  
Was bent to take the vestal vow,  
And shroud, within Saint Hilda's gloom,  
Her blasted hopes and wither'd bloom.

## VI.

She sate upon the galley's prow,  
And seem'd to mark the waves below ;  
Nay, seem'd, so fixed her look and eye,  
To count them as they glided by.  
She saw them not — 'twas seeming all —  
Far other scene her thoughts recall, —  
A sun-scorch'd desert, waste and bare,  
Nor waves, nor breezes, murmur'd there ;  
There saw she, where some careless hand  
O'er a dead corpse had heap'd the sand,  
To hide it till the jackals come,  
To tear it from the scanty tomb. —  
See what a woful look was given,  
As she raised up her eyes to heaven !

## VII.

Lovely, and gentle, and distress'd —  
These charms might tame the fiercest breast ;  
Harpers have sung, and poets told,  
That he, in fury uncontroll'd,  
The shaggy monarch of the wood,  
Before a virgin, fair and good,  
Hath pacified his savage mood.  
But passions in the human frame  
Oft put the lion's rage to shame :  
And jealousy, by dark intrigue,  
With sordid avarice in league,  
Had practised with their bowl and knife,  
Against the mourner's harmless life.  
This crime was charged 'gainst those who lay  
Prison'd in Cuthbert's islet gray.

## VIII.

And now the vessel skirts the strand  
Of mountainous Northumberland ;  
Towns, towers, and halls, successive rise,  
And catch the nuns' delighted eyes.  
Monk-Wearmouth soon behind them lay,  
And Tynemouth's priory and bay ;  
They mark'd, amid her trees, the hall  
Of lofty Seaton-Delaval ;

They saw the Blythe and Wansbeck floods  
Rush to the sea through sounding woods ;  
They pass'd the tower of Widderington,  
Mother of many a valiant son ;  
At Coquet-isle their beads they tell  
To the good Saint who own'd the cell ;  
Then did the Alne attention claim,  
And Warkworth, proud of Percy's name ;  
And next, they cross'd themselves, to hear  
The whitening breaker sound so near,  
Where, boiling through the rocks, they roar  
On Dunstanborough's cavern'd shore ;  
Thy tower, proud Bamborough, mark'd they there,  
King Ida's castle, huge and square,  
From its tall rock look grimly down,  
And on the swelling ocean frown ;  
Then from the coast they bore away,  
And reach'd the Holy Island's bay.

## IX.

The tide did now its flood-mark gain,  
And girdled in the Saint's domain :  
For, with the flow and ebb, its style  
Varies from continent to isle ;  
Dry-shod, o'er sands, twice every day,  
The pilgrims to the shrine find way ;  
Twice every day, the waves efface  
Of staves and sandall'd feet the trace.  
As to the port the galley flew,  
Higher and higher rose to view  
The Castle with its battled walls,  
The ancient Monastery's halls,  
A solemn, huge, and dark-red pile,  
Placed on the margin of the isle.

## X.

In Saxon strength that Abbey frown'd,  
With massive arches broad and round,  
That rose alternate, row and row,  
On ponderous columns, short and low,  
Built ere the art was known,  
By pointed aisle, and shafted stalk,

The arcades of an alley'd walk  
To emulate in stone.  
On the deep walls, the heathen Dane  
Had pour'd his impious rage in vain ;  
And needful was such strength to these,  
Exposed to the tempestuous seas,  
Scourged by the winds' eternal sway,  
Open to rovers fierce as they,  
Which could twelve hundred years withstand  
Winds, waves, and northern pirates' hand.  
Not but that portions of the pile,  
Rebuilt in a later style,  
Show'd where the spoiler's hand had been ;  
Not but the wasting sea-breeze keen  
Had worn the pillar's carving quaint,  
And moulder'd in his niche the saint,  
And rounded, with consuming power,  
The pointed angles of each tower ;  
Yet still entire the Abbey stood,  
Like veteran, worn, but unsubdued.

## XI.

Soon as they near'd his turrets strong,  
The maidens raised Saint Hilda's song,  
And with the sea-wave and the wind,  
Their voices, sweetly shrill, combined,  
And made harmonious close ;  
Then, answering from the sandy shore,  
Half-drown'd amid the breakers' roar,  
According chorus rose :  
Down to the haven of the Isle,  
The monks and nuns in order file,  
From Cuthbert's cloisters grim ;  
Banner, and cross, and relics there,  
To meet Saint Hilda's maids, they bare ;  
And, as they caught the sounds on air,  
They echoed back the hymn.  
The islanders, in joyous mood,  
Rush'd emulously through the flood,  
To hale the bark to land ;  
Conspicuous by her veil and hood,  
Signing the cross, the Abbess stood,  
And bless'd them with her hand.



## XII.

Suppose we now the welcome said,  
Suppose the Convent banquet made :  
All through the holy dome,  
Through cloister, aisle, and gallery,  
Wherever vestal maid might pry,  
Nor risk to meet unhallow'd eye,  
The stranger sisters roam :  
Till fell the evening damp with dew,  
And the sharp sea-breeze coldly blew,  
For there, even summer night is chill.  
Then, having stray'd and gazed their fill,  
They closed around the fire ;  
And all, in turn, essay'd to paint  
The rival merits of their saint,  
A theme that ne'er can tire  
A holy maid : for, be it known,  
That their saint's honor is their own.

## XIII.

Then Whitby's nuns exulting told,  
How to their house three Barons bold  
Must menial service do ;  
While horns blow out a note of shame,  
And monks cry " Fye upon your name !  
In wrath, for loss of silvan game,  
Saint Hilda's priest ye slew." —  
" This, on Ascension-day, each year,  
While laboring on our harbor-pier,  
Must Herbert, Bruce, and Percy hear." —  
They told, how in their convent-cell  
A Saxon princess once did dwell,  
The lovely Edelfled.  
And how, of thousand snakes, each one  
Was changed into a coil of stone,  
When holy Hilda pray'd ;  
Themselves, within their holy bound,  
Their stony folds had often found.  
They told, how sea-fowls' pinions fail,  
As over Whitby's towers they sail,  
And, sinking down, with flutterings faint,  
They do their homage to the saint.

## XIV.

Nor did Saint Cuthbert's daughters fail  
To vie with these in holy tale ;  
His body's resting-place of old,  
How oft their patron changed, they told ;  
How, when the rude Dane burn'd their pile,  
The monks fled forth from Holy Isle ;  
O'er northern mountain, marsh, and moor,  
From sea to sea, from shore to shore,  
Seven years Saint Cuthbert's corpse they bore.

They rested them in fair Melrose ;  
But though, alive, he loved it well,  
Not there his relics might repose ;  
For, wondrous tale to tell !

In his stone-coffin forth he rides,  
A ponderous bark for river tides,  
Yet light as gossamer it glides,  
Downward to Tilmouth cell.

Nor long was his abiding there,  
For southward did the saint repair ;  
Chester-le-Street, and Rippon, saw  
His holy corpse, ere Wardilaw

Hail'd him with joy and fear ;  
And, after many wanderings past,  
He chose his lordly seat at last,  
Where his cathedral, huge and vast,

Looks down upon the Wear :  
There, deep in Durham's Gothic shade,  
His relics are in secret laid ;

But none may know the place,  
Save of his holiest servants three,  
Deep sworn to solemn secrecy,  
Who share that wondrous grace.

## XV.

Who may his miracles declare !  
Even Scotland's dauntless king, and heir,  
(Although with them they led  
Galwegians, wild as ocean's gale,  
And Lodon's knights, all sheathed in mail,  
And the bold men of Teviotdale,)  
Before his standard fled.

'Twas he, to vindicate his reign,  
Edged Alfred's falchion on the Dane,  
And turn'd the Conqueror back again,  
When, with his Norman bowyer band,  
He came to waste Northumberland.

## XVI.

But fain Saint Hilda's nuns would learn  
If, on a rock, by Lindisfarne,  
Saint Cuthbert sits, and toils to frame  
The sea-born beads that bear his name :  
Such tales had Whitby's fishers told,  
And said they might his shape behold,  
And hear his anvil sound ;  
A deaden'd clang, — a huge dim form,  
Seen but, and heard, when gathering storm  
And night were closing round.  
But this, as tale of idle fame,  
The nuns of Lindisfarne disclaim.

## XVII.

While round the fire such legends go,  
Far different was the scene of woe,  
Where, in a secret aisle beneath,  
Council was held of life and death.  
It was more dark and lone that vault,  
Than the worst dungeon cell :  
Old Colwulf built it, for his fault,  
In penitence to dwell,  
When he, for cowl and beads, laid down  
The Saxon battle-axe and crown.  
This den, which, chilling every sense  
Of feeling, hearing, sight,  
Was call'd the Vault of Penitence,  
Excluding air and light,  
Was, by the prelate Sexhelm, made  
A place of burial for such dead,  
As, having died in mortal sin,  
Might not be laid the church within.  
'Twas now a place of punishment ;  
Whence if so loud a shriek were sent,  
As reach'd the upper air,  
The hearers bless'd themselves, and said,

The spirits of the sinful dead  
 Bemoan'd their torments there.

## XVIII.

But though, in the monastic pile,  
 Did of this penitential aisle  
 Some vague tradition go,  
 Few only, save the Abbot, knew  
 Where the place lay; and still more few  
 Were those, who had from him the clew  
 To that dread vault to go.  
 Victim and executioner  
 Were blindfold when transported there.  
 In low dark rounds the arches hung,  
 From the rude rock the side-walls sprung;  
 The grave-stones, rudely sculptured o'er,  
 Half sunk in earth, by time half wore,  
 Were all the pavement of the floor;  
 The mildew-drops fell one by one,  
 With tinkling splash upon the stone.  
 A cresset,<sup>1</sup> in an iron chain,  
 Which served to light this drear domain,  
 With damp and darkness seemed to strive,  
 As if it scarce might keep alive;  
 And yet it dimly served to show  
 The awful conclave met below.

## XIX.

There, met to doom in secrecy,  
 Were placed the heads of convents three:  
 All servants of Saint Benedict,  
 The statutes of whose order strict  
 On iron table lay;  
 In long black dress, on seats of stone,  
 Behind were these three judges shown  
 By the pale cresset's ray:  
 The Abbess of Saint Hilda's, there,  
 Sat for a space with visage bare,  
 Until, to hide her bosom's swell,  
 And tear-drops that for pity fell,  
 She closely drew her veil:

<sup>1</sup> Antique chandelier.

Yon shrouded figure, as I guess,  
 By her proud mien and flowing dress,  
 Is Tynemouth's haughty Prioress,  
 And she with awe looks pale :  
 And he, that Ancient Man, whose sight  
 Has long been quenched by age's night,  
 Upon whose wrinkled brow alone,  
 Nor ruth, nor mercy's trace is shown,  
 Whose look is hard and stern, —  
 Saint Cuthbert's Abbot is his style ;  
 For sanctity call'd, through the isle,  
 The Saint of Lindisfarne.

## XX.

Before them stood a guilty pair ;  
 But, though an equal fate they share,  
 Yet one alone deserves our care.  
 Her sex a page's dress belied ;  
 The cloak and doublet, loosely tied,  
 Obscured her charms, but could not hide.  
 Her cap down o'er her face she drew ;  
 And, on her doublet breast,  
 She tried to hide the badge of blue,  
 Lord Marmion's falcon crest.  
 But, at the Prioress' command,  
 A monk undid the silken band,  
 That tied her tresses fair,  
 And raised the bonnet from her head,  
 And down her slender form they spread,  
 In ringlets rich and rare.  
 Constance de Beverly they know,  
 Sister profess'd of Fontevraud,  
 Whom the church numbered with the dead,  
 For broken vows, and convent fled.

## XXI.

When thus her face was given to view,  
 (Although so pallid was her hue,  
 It did a ghastly contrast bear  
 To those bright ringlets glistening fair,)  
 Her look composed, and steady eye,  
 Bespoke a matchless constancy ;

And there she stood so calm and pale,  
That, but her breathing did not fail,  
And motion slight of eye and head,  
And of her bosom, warranted  
That neither sense nor pulse she lacks,  
You might have thought a form of wax,  
Wrought to the very life, was there ;  
So still she was, so pale, so fair.

## XXII.

Her comrade was a sordid soul,  
Such as does murder for a meed ;  
Who, but of fear, knows no control,  
Because his conscience, sear'd and foul,  
Feels not the import of his deed ;  
One, whose brute-feeling ne'er aspires  
Beyond his own more brute desires.  
Such tools the Tempter ever needs,  
To do the savagest of deeds ;  
For them no vision'd terrors daunt,  
Their nights no fancied spectres haunt,  
One fear with them, of all most base,  
The fear of death, — alone finds place.  
This wretch was clad in frock and cowl,  
And shamed not loud to moan and howl,  
His body on the floor to dash,  
And crouch, like hound beneath the lash ;  
While his mute partner, standing near,  
Waited her doom without a tear.

## XXIII.

Yet well the luckless wretch might shriek,  
Well might her paleness terror speak !  
For there were seen in that dark wall,  
Two niches, narrow, deep and tall ; —  
Who enters at such grisly door,  
Shall ne'er, I ween, find exit more.  
In each a slender meal was laid ;  
Of roots, of water, and of bread :  
By each, in Benedictine dress,  
Two haggard monks stood motionless ;  
Who, holding high a blazing torch,  
Show'd the grim entrance of the porch :

Reflecting back the smoky beam,  
The dark-red walls and arches gleam.  
Hewn stones and cement were display'd,  
And building tools in order laid.

## XXIV.

These executioners were chose,  
As men who were with mankind foes,  
And with despite and envy fired,  
Into the cloister had retired ;  
Or who, in desperate doubt of grace,  
Strove, by deep penance, to efface  
Of some foul crime the stain ;  
For, as the vassals of her will,  
Such men the Church selected still,  
As either joy'd in doing ill,  
Or thought more grace to gain,  
If, in her cause, they wrestled down  
Feelings their nature strove to own.  
By strange device were they brought there,  
They knew not how, nor knew not where.

## XXV.

And now that blind old Abbot rose,  
To speak the Chapter's doom,  
On those the wall was to enclose,  
Alive, within the tomb ;  
But stopp'd, because that woful Maid,  
Gathering her powers, to speak essay'd.  
Twice she essay'd, and twice in vain ;  
Her accents might no utterance gain ;  
Nought but imperfect murmurs slip  
From her convulsed and quivering lip ;  
'Twixt each attempt all was so still,  
You seem'd to hear a distant rill, —  
'Twas ocean's swells and falls ;  
For though this vault of sin and fear  
Was to the sounding surge so near,  
A tempest there you scarce could hear  
So massive were the walls.



## XXVI.

At length, an effort sent apart  
The blood that curdled to her heart,  
And light came to her eye,  
And color dawn'd upon her cheek,  
A hectic and a flutter'd streak,  
Like that left on the Cheviot peak,  
By Autumn's stormy sky;  
And when her silence broke at length,  
Still as she spoke she gathered strength,  
And arm'd herself to bear.  
It was a fearful sight to see  
Such high resolve and constancy,  
In form so soft and fair.

## XXVII.

"I speak not to implore your grace,  
Well know I, for one minute's space  
Successless might I sue :  
Nor do I speak your prayers to gain,  
For if a death of lingering pain,  
To cleanse my sins, be penance vain,  
Vain are your masses too. —  
I list'n'd to a traitor's tale,  
I left the convent and the veil ;  
For three long years I bow'd my pride,  
A horse-boy in his train to ride ;  
And well my folly's meed he gave,  
Who forfeited, to be his slave,  
All here, and all beyond the grave. —  
He saw young Clara's face more fair,  
He knew her of broad lands the heir,  
Forgot his vows, his faith forswore,  
And Constance was beloved no more. —  
'Tis an old tale, and often told ;  
But did my fate and wish agree,  
Ne'er had been read, in story old,  
Of maiden true betray'd for gold,  
That loved, or was avenged, like me.

## XXVIII.

"The King approved his favorite's aim ;  
In vain a rival barr'd his claim,

Whose fate with Clare's was plight,  
 For he attaints that rival's fame  
 With treason's charge — and on they came,  
 In mortal lists to fight.  
 Their oaths are said,  
 Their prayers are pray'd,  
 Their lances in the rest are laid,  
 They meet in mortal shock ;  
 And, hark ! the throng, with thundering cry,  
 Shout ' Marmion !' Marmion ! to the sky,  
 De Wilton to the block !'  
 Say ye, who preach Heaven shall decide  
 When in the lists two champions ride,  
 Say, was Heaven's justice here ?  
 When, loyal in his love and faith,  
 Wilton found overthrow or death,  
 Beneath a traitor's spear ?  
 How false the charge, how true he fell,  
 This guilty packet best can tell." —  
 Then drew a packet from her breast,  
 Paused, gather'd voice, and spoke the rest. —

## XXIX.

"Still was false Marmion's bridal staid ;  
 To Whitby's convent fled the maid,  
 The hated match to shun.  
 ' Ho ! shifts she thus ?' king Henry cried ;  
 ' Sir Marmion, she shall be thy bride,  
 If she were sworn a nun.'  
 One way remain'd — the King's command  
 Sent Marmion to the Scottish land :  
 I linger'd here, and rescue plann'd  
 For Clara and for me :  
 This caitiff monk, for gold, did swear,  
 He would to Whitby's shrine repair,  
 And, by his drugs, my rival fair  
 A saint in heaven should be.  
 But ill the dastard kept his oath,  
 Whose cowardice has undone us both.

## XXX.

" And now my tongue the secret tells,  
 Not that remorse my bosom swells,

But to assure my soul that none  
Shall ever wed with Marmion.  
Had fortune my last hope betray'd,  
This packet, to the King convey'd,  
Had given him to the headsman's stroke,  
Although my heart that instant broke. —  
Now, men of death, work forth your will,  
For I can suffer, and be still;  
And come he slow, or come he fast,  
It is but Death who comes at last.

## XXXI.

"Yet dread me, from my living tomb,  
Ye vassal slaves of bloody Rome!  
If Marmion's late remorse should wake,  
Full soon such vengeance will he take,  
That you shall wish the fiery Dane  
Had rather been your guest again.  
Behind, a darker hour ascends!  
The altars quake, the crozier bends,  
The ire of a despotic King  
Rides forth upon destruction's wing;  
Then shall these vaults, so strong and deep,  
Burst open to the sea-winds' sweep;  
Some traveller then shall find my bones  
Whitening amid disjointed stones,  
And, ignorant of priests' cruelty,  
Marvel such relics here should be."

## XXXII.

Fix'd was her look, and stern her air:  
Back from her shoulders stream'd her hair;  
The locks, that wont her brow to shade,  
Stared up erectly from her head;  
Her figure seem'd to rise more high;  
Her voice, despair's wild energy  
Had given a tone of prophecy.  
Appall'd the astonish'd conclave sate;  
With stupid eyes the men of fate  
Gazed on the light inspired form,  
And listen'd for the avenging storm;  
The judges felt the victim's dread;  
No hand was moved, no word was said,

Till thus the Abbot's doom was given,  
Raising his sightless balls to heaven:—

“Sister, let thy sorrows cease;  
Sinful brother, part in peace!”

From that dire dungeon, place of doom,  
Of execution too, and tomb,

Paced forth the judges three;  
Sorrow it were, and shame, to tell  
The butcher-work that there befell,  
When they had glided from the cell  
Of sin and misery.

## XXXIII.

An hundred winding steps convey  
That conclave to the upper day;  
But, ere they breathed the fresher air,  
They heard the shriekings of despair,  
And many a stifled groan:

With speed their upward way they take,  
(Such speed as age and fear can make,)  
And cross'd themselves for terror's sake,

As hurrying, tottering on:  
Even in the vesper's heavenly tone,  
They seem'd to hear a dying groan,  
And bade the passing knell to toll  
For welfare of a parting soul.

Slow o'er the midnight wave it swung,  
Northumbrian rocks in answer rung;  
To Warkworth cell the echoes roll'd,  
His beads the wakeful hermit told,  
The Bamborough peasant raised his head,  
But slept ere half a prayer he said;  
So far was heard the mighty knell,  
The stag sprung up on Cheviot Fell,  
Spread his broad nostril to the wind,  
Listed before, aside, behind,  
Then couch'd him down beside the hind,  
And quaked among the mountain fern,  
To hear that sound so dull and stern.

## INTRODUCTION TO CANTO THIRD.

TO WILLIAM ERSKINE, ESQ.

*Ashestiel, Ettrick Forest.*

LIKE April morning clouds, that pass,  
 With varying shadow, o'er the grass,  
 And imitate, on field and furrow,  
 Life's chequer'd scene of joy and sorrow;  
 Like streamlet of the mountain north,  
 Now in a torrent racing forth,  
 Now winding slow its silver train,  
 And almost slumbering on the plain;  
 Like breezes of the Autumn day,  
 Whose voice inconstant dies away,  
 And ever swells again as fast,  
 When the ear deems its murmur past;  
 Thus various, my romantic theme  
 Flits, winds, or sinks, a morning dream.  
 Yet pleased, our eye pursues the trace  
 Of Light and Shade's inconstant race;  
 Pleased, views the rivulet afar,  
 Weaving its maze irregular;  
 And pleased, we listen as the breeze  
 Heaves its wild sigh through Autumn trees:  
 Then, wild as cloud, or stream, or gale,  
 Flow on, flow unconfined, my Tale!

Need I to thee, dear Erskine, tell  
 I love the license all too well,  
 In sounds now lowly, and now strong,  
 To raise the desultory song? —  
 Oft, when 'mid such capricious chime,  
 Some transient fit of lofty rhyme  
 To thy kind judgment seem'd excuse  
 For many an error of the muse,  
 Oft hast thou said, "If, still mis-spent,  
 Thine hours to poetry are lent,  
 Go, and to tame thy wandering course,  
 Quaff from the fountain at the source;

Approach those masters, o'er whose tomb  
 Immortal laurels ever bloom :  
 Instructive of the feeblar bard,  
 Still from the grave their voice is heard ;  
 From them, and from the paths they show'd,  
 Choose honor'd guide and practised road :  
 Nor ramble on through brake and maze,  
 With harpers rude, of barbarous days.

“ Or deem'st thou not our later time  
 Yields topic meet for classic rhyme ?  
 Hast thou no elegiac verse  
 For Brunswick's venerable hearse ?  
 What ! not a line, a tear, a sigh,  
 When valor bleeds for liberty ? —  
 Oh, hero of that glorious time,  
 When, with unrivall'd light sublime, —  
 Though martial Austria, and though all  
 The might of Russia, and the Gaul,  
 Though banded Europe stood her foes —  
 The star of Brandenburg arose !  
 Thou couldst not live to see her beam  
 For ever quenched in Jena's stream.  
 Lamented Chief ! — it was not given  
 To thee to change the doom of Heaven,  
 And crush that dragon in its birth.  
 Predestined scourge of guilty earth.  
 Lamented Chief ! — not thine the power  
 To save in that presumptuous hour,  
 When Prussia hurried to the field,  
 And snatched the spear, but left the shield !  
 Valor and skill 'twas thine to try,  
 And, tried in vain, 'twas thine to die.  
 Ill had it seem'd thy silver hair  
 The last, the bitterest pang to share,  
 For princedoms reft, and scutcheons riven,  
 And birthrights to usurpers given :  
 Thy lands, thy children's wrongs to feel,  
 And witness woes thou couldst not heal !  
 On thee relenting Heaven bestows  
 For honor'd life an honor'd close ;  
 And when revolves, in time's sure change,  
 The hour of Germany's revenge,

When, breathing fury for her sake,  
Some new Arminius shall awake,  
Her champion, ere he strike, shall come  
To whet his sword on BRUNSWICK'S tomb.<sup>1</sup>

“Or of the Red-Cross hero teach,  
Dauntless in dungeon as on breach :  
Alike to him the sea, the shore,  
The brand, the bridle, or the oar.  
Alike to him the war that calls  
Its votaries to the shatter'd walls,  
Which the grim Turk, besmear'd with blood,  
Against the Invincible made good ;  
Or that, whose thundering voice could wake  
The silence of the polar lake,  
When stubborn Russ, and metal'd Swede,  
On the warp'd wave their death-game play'd ;<sup>2</sup>  
Or that, where Vengeance and Affright  
Howl'd round the father of the fight,  
Who snatched, on Alexandria's sand,  
The conqueror's wreath with dying hand.<sup>3</sup>

“Or, if to touch such chord be thine,  
Restore the ancient tragic line,  
And emulate the notes that rung  
From the wild harp, which silent hung  
By silver Avon's holy shore,  
Till twice an hundred years roll'd o'er ;  
When she, the bold enchantress came,  
With fearless hand and heart on flame !  
From the pale willow snatch'd the treasure,  
And swept it with a kindred measure,  
Till Avon's swans, while rung the grove  
With Montfort's hate and Basil's love,  
Awakening at the inspired strain,  
Deem'd their own Shakspeare lived again.”

Thy friendship thus thy judgment wronging,  
With praises not to me belonging,  
In task more meet for mightiest powers,  
Wouldst thou engage my thriftless hours.

<sup>1</sup> Killed at Auerstadt, 1806.

<sup>2</sup> Sir Sidney Smith.

<sup>3</sup> Sir Ralph Abercromby.



But say, my Erskine, hast thou weigh'd  
 That secret power by all obey'd,  
 Which warps not less the passive mind,  
 Its source conceal'd, or undefined ;  
 Whether an impulse, that has birth  
 Soon as the infant wakes on earth,  
 One with our feelings and our powers,  
 And rather part of us than ours ;  
 Or whether fitlier term'd the sway  
 Of habit form'd in early day ?  
 Howe'er derived, its force confest  
 Rules with despotic sway the breast,  
 And drags us on by viewless chain,  
 While taste and reason plead in vain.  
 Look east, and ask the Belgian why,  
 Beneath Batavia's sultry sky,  
 He seeks not eager to inhale  
 The freshness of the mountain gale,  
 Content to rear his whitened wall  
 Beside the dank and dull canal ?  
 He'll say, from youth he loved to see  
 The white sail gliding by the tree.  
 Or see yon weather-beaten hind,  
 Whose sluggish herds before him wind,  
 Whose tatter'd plaid and rugged cheek  
 His northern clime and kindred speak ;  
 Through England's laughing meads he goes,  
 And England's wealth around him flows ;  
 Ask, if it would content him well,  
 At ease in those gay plains to dwell,  
 Where hedge-rows spread a verdant screen,  
 And spires and forests intervene,  
 And the neat cottage peeps between ?  
 No ! not for these would he exchange  
 His dark Lochaber's boundless range :  
 Not for fair Devon's meads forsake  
 Bennevis gray, and Garry's lake.

Thus while I ape the measure wild  
 Of tales that charm'd me yet a child,  
 Rude though they be, still with the chime  
 Return the thoughts of early time ;  
 And feelings, roused in life's first day,  
 Glow in the line, and prompt the lay.

Then rise those crags, that mountain tower  
Which charm'd my fancy's wakening hour.  
Though no broad river swept along,  
To claim, perchance, heroic song ;  
Though sigh'd no groves in summer gale,  
To prompt of love a softer tale ;  
Though scarce a puny streamlet's speed  
Claim'd homage from a shepherd's reed ;  
Yet was poetic impulse given,  
By the green hill and clear blue heaven.  
It was a barren scene, and wild,  
Where naked cliffs were rudely piled ;  
But ever and anon between  
Lay velvet tufts of loveliest green ;  
And well the lonely infant knew  
Recesses where the wall-flower grew,  
And honeysuckle loved to crawl  
Up the low crag and ruin'd wall.  
I deem'd such nooks the sweetest shade  
The sun in all its round survey'd ;  
And still I thought that shatter'd tower  
The mightiest work of human power ;  
And marvell'd as the aged hind  
With some strange tale bewitch'd my mind,  
Of forayers, who, with headlong force,  
Down from that strength had spurr'd their horse,  
Their southern rapine to renew,  
Far in the distant Cheviots blue,  
And, home returning, fill'd the hall  
With revel, wassel-rout, and brawl.  
Methought that still, with trump and clang,  
The gateway's broken arches rang ;  
Methought grim features, seam'd with scars,  
Glared through the window's rusty bars,  
And ever, by the winter hearth,  
Old tales I heard of woe or mirth,  
Of lovers' slights, of ladies' charms,  
Of witches' spells, of warriors' arms ;  
Of patriot battles, won of old  
By Wallace wight and Bruce the bold ;  
Of later fields of feud and fight,  
When, pouring from their Highland height,  
The Scottish clans, in headlong sway,  
Had swept the scarlet ranks away.

While stretch'd at length upon the floor,  
 Again I fought each combat o'er,  
 Pebbles and shells, in order laid,  
 The mimic ranks of war display'd;  
 And onward still the Scottish Lion bore,  
 And still the scatter'd Southron fled before.

Still, with vain fondness, could I trace,  
 Anew, each kind familiar face,  
 That brighten'd at our evening fire!  
 From the thatch'd mansion's gray-hair'd Sire,  
 Wise without learning, plain and good,  
 And sprung of Scotland's gentler blood;  
 Whose eye, in age, quick, clear, and keen,  
 Show'd what in youth its glance had been;  
 Whose doom discording neighbors sought,  
 Content with equity unbought;  
 To him the venerable Priest,  
 Our frequent and familiar guest,  
 Whose life and manners well could paint  
 Alike the student and the saint;  
 Alas! whose speech too oft I broke  
 With gambol rude and timeless joke:  
 For I was wayward, bold, and wild,  
 A self-will'd imp, a grandame's child;  
 But half a plague, and half a jest,  
 Was still endured, beloved, caress'd.

For me, thus nurtured, dost thou ask  
 The classic poet's well-conn'd task?  
 Nay, Erskine, nay — On the wild hill  
 Let the wild heath-bell flourish still;  
 Cherish the tulip, prune the vine,  
 But freely let the woodbine twine,  
 And leave untrimm'd the eglantine:  
 Nay, my friend, nay — Since oft thy praise  
 Hath given fresh vigor to my lays;  
 Since oft thy judgment could refine  
 My flatten'd thought, or cumbrous line;  
 Still kind, as is thy wont, attend,  
 And in the minstrel spare the friend.  
 Though wild as cloud, as stream, as gale,  
 Flow forth, flow unrestrain'd, my Tale!

## CANTO THIRD.

## THE HOSTEL, OR INN.

## I.

THE livelong day Lord Marmion rode :  
The mountain path the Palmer show'd,  
By glen and streamlet winded still,  
Where stunted birches hid the rill.  
They might not choose the lowland road,  
For the Merse forayers were abroad,  
Who, fired with hate and thirst of prey,  
Had scarcely fail'd to bar their way.  
Oft on the trampling band, from crown  
Of some tall cliff, the deer look'd down ;  
On wing of jet, from his repose  
In the deep heath, the black-cock rose ;  
Sprung from the gorse the timid roe,  
Nor waited for the bending bow ;  
And when the stony path began,  
By which the naked peak they wan,  
Up flew the snowy ptarmigan.  
The noon had long been pass'd before  
They gain'd the height of Lammermoor ;  
Thence winding down the northern way,  
Before them, at the close of day,  
Old Gifford's towers and hamlet lay.

## II.

No summons calls them to the tower,  
To spend the hospitable hour.  
To Scotland's camp the Lord was gone ;  
His cautious dame, in bower alone,  
Dreaded her castle to uncloze,  
So late, to unknown friends or foes,  
On through the hamlet as they paced,  
Before a porch, whose front was graced  
With bush and flagon trimly placed,  
Lord Marmion drew his rein :

The village inn seem'd large, though rude ;  
Its cheerful fire and hearty food  
Might well relieve his train.  
Down from their seats the horsemen sprung,  
With jingling spurs the court-yard rung ;  
They bind their horses to the stall,  
For forage, food, and firing call,  
And various clamor fills the hall :  
Weighing the labor with the cost,  
Toils everywhere the bustling host.

## III.

Soon by the chimney's merry blaze,  
Through the rude hostel might you gaze ;  
Might see, where, in dark nook aloof,  
The rafters of the sooty roof  
Bore wealth of winter cheer ;  
Of sea-fowl dried, and solands store,  
And gammons of the tusky boar,  
And savory haunch of deer.  
The chimney arch projected wide ;  
Above, around it, and beside,  
Were tools for housewives' hand ;  
Nor wanted, in that martial day,  
The implements of Scottish fray,  
The buckler, lance, and brand.  
Beneath its shade, the place of state,  
On oaken settle Marmion sate,  
And view'd around the blazing hearth.  
His followers mix in noisy mirth ;  
Whom with brown ale, in jolly tide,  
From ancient vessels ranged aside,  
Full actively their host supplied.

## IV.

Theirs was the glee of martial breast,  
And laughter theirs at little jest ;  
And oft Lord Marmion deigned to aid,  
And mingle in the mirth they made ;  
For though, with men of high degree,  
The proudest of the proud was he,  
Yet, train'd in camps, he knew the art  
To win the soldier's hardy heart.

They love a captain to obey,  
Boisterous as March, yet fresh as May  
With open hand, and brow as free,  
Lover of wine and minstrelsy;  
Ever the first to scale a tower,  
As venturous in a lady's bower: —  
Such buxom chief shall lead his host  
From India's fires to Zembla's frost.

## V.

Resting upon his pilgrim staff,  
Right opposite the Palmer stood;  
His thin dark visage seen but half,  
Half hidden by his hood.  
Still fix'd on Marmion was his look,  
Which he, who ill such gaze could brook,  
Strove by a frown to quell;  
But not for that, though more than once  
Full met their stern encountering glance,  
The Palmer's visage fell.

## VI.

By fits less frequent from the crowd  
Was heard the burst of laughter loud;  
For still, as squire and archer stared  
On that dark face and matted beard,  
Their glee and game declined.  
All gazed at length in silence drear,  
Unbroke, save when in comrade's ear  
Some yeoman, wondering in his fear,  
Thus whisper'd forth his mind: —  
“Saint Mary! saw'st thou e'er such sight?  
How pale his cheek, his eye how bright,  
Whene'er the fire-brand's fickle light  
Glances beneath his cowl!  
Full on our Lord he sets his eye;  
For his best palfrey, would not I  
Endure that sullen scowl.”

## VII.

But Marmion, as to chase the awe  
Which thus had quell'd their hearts, who saw

The ever-varying fire-light show  
That figure stern and face of woe,  
Now call'd upon a squire : —  
“Fitz-Eustace, know'st thou not some lay,  
To speed the lingering night away?  
We slumber by the fire.” —

## VIII.

“So please you,” thus the youth rejoin'd,  
“Our choicest minstrel's left behind.  
Ill may we hope to please your ear,  
Accustom'd Constant's strains to hear.  
The harp full deftly can he strike,  
And wake the lover's lute alike ;  
To dear Saint Valentine, no thrush  
Sings livelier from a spring-tide bush,  
No nightingale her love-lorn tune  
More sweetly warbles to the moon.  
Woe to the cause, whate'er it be,  
Detains from us his melody,  
Lavish'd on rocks and billows stern,  
Or duller monks of Lindisfarne.  
Now must I venture, as I may  
To sing his favorite roundelay.”

## IX.

A mellow voice Fitz-Eustace had,  
The air he chose was wild and sad ;  
Such have I heard in Scottish land,  
Rise from the busy harvest band,  
When falls before the mountaineer,  
On Lowland plains, the ripen'd ear.  
Now one shrill voice the notes prolong,  
Now a wild chorus swells the song :  
Oft have I listen'd, and stood still,  
As it came soften'd up the hill,  
And deem'd it the lament of men  
Who languish'd for their native glen :  
And thought how sad would be such sound  
On Susquehana's swampy ground,  
Kentucky's wood-encumber'd brake,  
Or wild Ontario's boundless lake,



Where heart-sick exiles, in the strain,  
Recall'd fair Scotland's hills again !

X.

SONG.

Where shall the lover rest,  
Whom the fates sever,  
From his true maiden's breast,  
Parted for ever ?  
Where, through groves deep and high,  
Sounds the far billow,  
Where early violets die,  
Under the willow.

CHORUS.

*Eleu loro, &c.* Soft shall be his pillow.

There, through the summer day,  
Cool streams are laving ;  
There, while the tempests sway,  
Scarce are boughs waving ;  
There, thy rest shalt thou take,  
Parted for ever,  
Never again to wake,  
Never, O never !

CHORUS.

*Eleu loro, &c.* Never, O never !

XI.

Where shall the traitor rest,  
He, the deceiver,  
Who could win maiden's breast,  
Ruin, and leave her ?  
In the lost battle,  
Borne down by the flying,  
Where mingles war's rattle  
With groans of the dying.

CHORUS.

*Eleu loro, &c.* There shall he be lying.

Her wing shall the eagle flap  
O'er the false-hearted ;  
His warm blood the wolf shall lap,  
Ere life be parted.  
Shame and dishonor sit  
By his grave ever ;  
Blessings shall hallow it, —  
Never, O never !

## CHORUS.

*Eleu loro, &c.* Never, O never !

## XII.

It ceased, the melancholy sound ;  
And silence sunk on all around.  
The air was sad ; but sadder still  
It fell on Marmion's ear,  
And plain'd as if disgrace and ill,  
And shameful death, were near.  
He drew his mantle past his face,  
Between it and the band,  
And rested with his head a space  
Reclining on his hand.  
His thoughts I scan not ; but I ween,  
That, could their import have been seen,  
The meanest groom in all the hall,  
That e'er tied courser to a stall,  
Would scarce have wished to be their prey,  
For Lutterward and Fontenaye.

## XIII.

High minds, of native pride and force,  
Most deeply feel thy pangs, Remorse !  
Fear, for their scourge, mean villains have,  
Thou art the torturer of the brave !  
Yet fatal strength they boast to steel  
Their minds to bear the wounds they feel,  
Even while they writhe beneath the smart  
Of civil conflict in the heart.  
For soon Lord Marmion raised his head,  
And, smiling, to Fitz-Eustace, said —  
“ Is it not strange, that, as ye sung,  
Seem'd in mine ear a death-peal rung,

Such as in nunneries they toll  
 For some departing sister's soul?  
 Say, what may this portend?" —  
 Then first the Palmer silence broke,  
 (The livelong day he had not spoke,)  
 "The death of a dear friend."

## XIV.

Marmion, whose steady heart and eye  
 Ne'er changed in worst extremity;  
 Marmion, whose soul could scantily brook,  
 Even from his King, a haughty look;  
 Whose accent of command controll'd,  
 In camps, the boldest of the bold; —  
 Thought, look, and utterance fail'd him now —  
 Fall'n was his glance, and flush'd his brow:  
 For either in the tone,  
 Or something in the Palmer's look,  
 So full upon his conscience strook,  
 That answer he found none.  
 Thus oft it haps, that when within  
 They shrink at sense of secret sin,  
 A feather daunts the brave;  
 A fool's wild speech confounds the wise,  
 And proudest princes veil their eyes  
 Before their meanest slave.

## XV.

Well might he falter! — By his aid  
 Was Constance Beverly betray'd.  
 Not that he augur'd of the doom,  
 Which on the living closed the tomb:  
 But, tired to hear the desperate maid  
 Threaten by turns, beseech, upbraid;  
 And wroth, because in wild despair  
 She practised on the life of Clare;  
 Its fugitive the Church he gave,  
 Though not a victim, but a slave;  
 And deem'd restraint in convent strange  
 Would hide her wrongs, and her revenge.  
 Himself, proud Henry's favorite peer,  
 Held Romish thunders idle fear;

Secure his pardon he might hold,  
For some slight mulct of penance-gold.  
Thus judging, he gave secret way,  
When the stern priests surprised their prey.  
His train but deem'd the favorite page  
Was left behind, to spare his age;  
Or other if they deem'd, none dared  
To mutter what he thought and heard :  
Woe to the vassal, who durst pry  
Into Lord Marmion's privacy !

## XVI.

His conscience slept — he deem'd her well,  
And safe secured in distant cell ;  
But, waken'd by her favorite lay,  
And that strange Palmer's boding say,  
That fell so ominous and drear,  
Full on the object of his fear,  
To aid remorse's venom'd throes,  
Dark tales of convent-vengeance rose ;  
And Constance, late betray'd and scorn'd,  
All lovely on his soul return'd ;  
Lovely as when, at treacherous call,  
She left her convent's peaceful wall,  
Crimson'd with shame, with terror mute,  
Dreading alike, escape, pursuit,  
Till love, victorious o'er alarms,  
Hid fears and blushes in his arms.

## XVII.

“ Alas ! ” he thought, “ how changed that mien !  
How changed these timid looks have been,  
Since years of guilt, and of disguise,  
Have steel'd her brow, and arm'd her eyes !  
No more of virgin terror speaks  
The blood that mantles in her cheeks :  
Fierce, and unfeminine, are there,  
Frenzy for joy, for grief despair ;  
And I the cause — for whom were given  
Her peace on earth, her hopes in heaven ! —  
Would,” thought he, as the picture grows,  
“ I on its stalk had left the rose !

Oh, why should man's success remove  
 The very charms that wake his love ! —  
 Her convent's peaceful solitude  
 Is now a prison harsh and rude ;  
 And, pent within the narrow cell,  
 How will her spirit chafe and swell !  
 How brook the stern monastic laws !  
 The penance how — and I the cause ! —  
 Vigil and scourge — perchance even worse ! ” —  
 And twice he rose to cry, “ To horse ! ” —  
 And twice his sovereign's mandate came,  
 Like damp upon a kindling flame ;  
 And twice he thought, “ Gave I not charge  
 She should be safe, though not at large ?  
 They durst not, for their island, shred  
 One golden ringlet from her head.”

## XVIII.

While thus in Marmion's bosom strove  
 Repentance and reviving love,  
 Like whirlwinds, whose contending sway  
 I've seen Loch Vennachar obey,  
 Their Host the Palmer's speech had heard,  
 And, talkative, took up the word :  
 “ Ay, reverend Pilgrim, you, who stray  
 From Scotland's simple land away,  
 To visit realms afar,  
 Full often learn the art to know  
 Of future weal, or future woe,  
 By word, or sign, or star ;  
 Yet might a knight his fortune hear,  
 If, knightlike, he despises fear,  
 Not far from hence ; — if fathers old  
 Aright our hamlet legend told.” —  
 These broken words the menials move,  
 (For marvels still the vulgar love,)  
 And, Marmion giving license cold,  
 His tale the Host thus gladly told : —

## XIX.

## THE HOST'S TALE.

“ A Clerk could tell what years have flown  
 Since Alexander fill'd our throne,

(Third monarch of that warlike name,) And eke the time when here he came To seek Sir Hugo, then our lord : A braver never drew a sword ; A wiser never, at the hour Of midnight, spoke the word of power : The same, whom ancient records call The founder of the Goblin-Hall. I would, Sir Knight, your longer stay Gave you that cavern to survey. Of lofty roof, and ample size, Beneath the castle deep it lies : To hew the living rock profound, The floor to pave, the arch to round, There never toil'd a mortal arm — It all was wrought by word and charm ; And I have heard my grandsire say, That the wild clamor and affray Of those dread artisans of hell, Who labor'd under Hugo's spell, Sounded as loud as ocean's war Among the caverns of Dunbar.

## XX.

“ The King Lord Gifford's castle sought,  
Deep laboring with uncertain thought ;  
Even then he muster'd all his host,  
To meet upon the western coast :  
For Norse and Danish galleys plied  
Their oars within the frith of Clyde.  
There floated Haco's banner trim,  
Above Norweyan warriors grim,  
Savage of heart, and large of limb ;  
Threatening both continent and isle,  
Bute, Arran, Cunninghame, and Kyle.  
Lord Gifford, deep beneath the ground,  
Heard Alexander's bugle sound,  
And tarried not his garb to change,  
But, in his wizard habit strange,  
Came forth, — a quaint and fearful sight ;  
His mantle lined with fox-skins white ;  
His high and wrinkled forehead bore

A pointed cap, such as of yore  
Clerks say that Pharaoh's Magi wore :  
His shoes were mark'd with cross and spell,  
Upon his breast a pentacle ;  
His zone, of virgin parchment thin,  
Or, as some tell, of dead man's skin,  
Bore many a planetary sign,  
Combust, and retrograde, and trine ;  
And in his hand he held prepared,  
A naked sword without a guard.

## XXI.

“ Dire dealings with the fiendish race  
Had mark'd strange lines upon his face :  
Vigil and fast had worn him grim,  
His eyesight dazzled seem'd and dim,  
As one unused to upper day ;  
Even his own menials with dismay  
Beheld, Sir Knight, the grisly Sire,  
In his unwonted wild attire ;  
Unwonted, for traditions run,  
He seldom thus beheld the sun. —  
' I know,' he said — (his voice was hoarse,  
And broken seem'd its hollow force) —  
' I know the cause, although untold,  
Why the King seeks his vassal's hold :  
Vainly from me my liege would know  
His kingdom's future weal or woe ;  
But yet, if strong his arm and heart,  
His courage may do more than art.

## XXII.

“ ‘ Of middle air the demons proud,  
Who ride upon the racking cloud,  
Can read, in fix'd or wandering star,  
The issues of events afar ;  
But still their sullen aid withhold,  
Save when by mightier force controll'd.  
Such late I summon'd to my hall ;  
And though so potent was the call,  
That scarce the deepest nook of hell  
I deem'd a refuge from the spell,



Yet, obstinate in silence still,  
 The haughty demon mocks my skill.  
 But thou, — who little know'st thy might,  
 As born upon that blessed night  
 When yawning graves, and dying groan,  
 Proclaim'd hell's empire overthrown, —  
 With untaught valor shalt compel  
 Response denied to magic spell.' —  
 'Gramercy,' quoth our Monarch free,  
 'Place him but front to front with me,  
 And, by this good and honor'd brand,  
 The gift of Cœur-de-Lion's hand,  
 Soothly I swear, that, tide what tide,  
 The demon shall a buffet bide.' —  
 His bearing bold the wizard view'd,  
 And thus, well pleased, his speech renew'd : —  
 'There spoke the blood of Malcolm! — mark :  
 Forth pacing hence, at midnight dark,  
 The rampart seek, whose circling crown  
 Crests the ascent of yonder down :  
 A southern entrance shalt thou find ;  
 There halt, and there thy bugle wind,  
 And trust thine elfin foe to see,  
 In guise of thy worst enemy :  
 Couch then thy lance, and spur thy steed —  
 Upon him ! and Saint George to speed !  
 If he go down, thou soon shalt know  
 Whate'er these airy sprites can show ! —  
 If thy heart fail thee in the strife,  
 I am no warrant for thy life.'

## XXIII.

"Soon as the midnight bell did ring,  
 Alone, and arm'd, forth rode the King  
 To that old camp's deserted round :  
 Sir Knight, you well might mark the mound,  
 Left-hand the town, — the Pictish race,  
 The trench, long since, in blood did trace :  
 The moor around is brown and bare,  
 The space within is green and fair.  
 The spot our village children know,  
 For there the earliest wild-flowers grow ;

But woe betide the wandering wight,  
 That treads its circle in the night !  
 The breadth across, a bowshot clear,  
 Gives ample space for full career :  
 Opposed to the four points of heaven,  
 By four deep gaps are entrance given.  
 The southernmost our Monarch past,  
 Halted, and blew a gallant blast ;  
 And on the north, within the ring,  
 Appear'd the form of England's King,  
 Who then, a thousand leagues afar,  
 In Palestine waged holy war :  
 Yet arms like England's did he wield,  
 Alike the leopards in the shield,  
 Alike his Syrian courser's frame,  
 The rider's length of limb the same :  
 Long afterwards did Scotland know,  
 Fell Edward <sup>1</sup> was her deadliest foe.

## XXIV.

“ The vision made our Monarch start,  
 But soon he mann'd his noble heart,  
 And in the first career they ran,  
 The Elfin Knight fell, horse and man ;  
 Yet did a splinter of his lance  
 Through Alexander's visor glance,  
 And razed the skin — a puny wound.  
 The King, light leaping to the ground,  
 With naked blade his phantom foe  
 Compell'd the future war to show.  
 Of Largs he saw the glorious plain,  
 Where still gigantic bones remain,  
     Memorial of the Danish war ;  
 Himself he saw, amid the field,  
 On high his brandish'd war-axe wield,  
     And strike proud Haco from his car,  
 While all around the shadowy Kings  
 Denmark's grim ravens cower'd their wings.  
 'Tis said, that, in that awful night,  
 Remoter visions met his sight,  
 Foreshowing future conquests far,  
 When our sons' sons wage northern war ;

<sup>1</sup> Edward I. surnamed Longshanks.

A royal city, tower and spire,  
 Redden'd the midnight sky with fire,  
 And shouting crews her navy bore,  
 Triumphant to the victor shore.  
 Such signs may learned clerks explain —  
 They pass the wit of simple swain.

## XXV.

“The joyful King turn'd home again,  
 Headed his host, and quell'd the Dane;  
 But yearly, when return'd the night  
 Of his strange combat with the sprite,  
 His wound must bleed and smart;  
 Lord Gifford then would gibing say,  
 ‘Bold as ye were, my liege, ye pay  
 The penance of your start.’  
 Long since, beneath Dunfermline's nave,  
 King Alexander fills his grave,  
 Our Lady give him rest!  
 Yet still the knightly spear and shield  
 The Elfin Warrior doth wield,  
 Upon the brown hill's breast;  
 And many a knight hath proved his chance,  
 In the charm'd ring to break a lance,  
 But all have foully sped;  
 Save two, as legends tell, and they  
 Were Wallace wight, and Gilbert Hay. —  
 Gentles, my tale is said.”

## XXVI.

The quaighs <sup>1</sup> were deep, the liquor strong,  
 And on the tale the yeoman-throng  
 Had made a comment sage and long,  
 But Marmion gave a sign:  
 And, with their lord, the squires retire;  
 The rest around the hostel fire,  
 Their drowsy limbs recline:  
 For pillow, underneath each head,  
 The quiver and the targe were laid.  
 Deep slumbering on the hostel floor,  
 Oppress'd with toil and ale, they snore:

<sup>1</sup> A wooden cup composed of staves hooped together.

The dying flame, in fitful change,  
Threw on the group its shadows strange.

## XXVII.

Apart, and nestling in the hay  
Of a waste loft, Fitz-Eustace lay;  
Scarce, by the pale moonlight, were seen  
The foldings of his mantle green:  
Lightly he dreamt, as youth will dream,  
Of sport by thicket, or by stream,  
Of hawk or hound, of ring or glove,  
Or, lighter yet, of lady's love.  
A cautious tread his slumber broke,  
And, close beside him, when he woke,  
In moonbeam half, and half in gloom,  
Stood a tall form, with nodding plume;  
But, ere his dagger Eustace drew,  
His master Marmion's voice he knew. —

## XXVIII.

“Fitz-Eustace! rise, — I cannot rest; —  
Yon churl's wild legend haunts my breast,  
And graver thoughts have chafed my mood:  
The air must cool my feverish blood;  
And fain would I ride forth, to see  
The scene of Elfin chivalry.  
Arise, and saddle me my steed;  
And, gentle Eustace, take good heed  
Thou dost not rouse these drowsy slaves;  
I would not, that the prating knaves  
Had cause for saying, o'er their ale,  
That I could credit such a tale.” —  
Then softly down the steps they slid;  
Eustace the stable door undid,  
And, darkling, Marmion's steed array'd,  
While, whispering, thus the Baron said: —

## XXIX.

“Didst never, good my youth, hear tell,  
That on the hour when I was born,  
Saint George, who graced my sire's chapelle,  
Down from his steed of marble fell,  
A weary wight forlorn?

The flattering chaplains all agree,  
The champion left his steed to me.  
I would, the omen's truth to show,  
That I could meet this Elfin Foe!  
Blithe would I battle, for the right  
To ask one question at the sprite; —  
Vain thought! for elves, if elves there be,  
An empty race, by fount or sea,  
To dashing waters dance and sing,  
Or round the green oak wheel their ring.”  
Thus speaking, he his steed bestrode,  
And from the hostel slowly rode.

## XXX.

Fitz-Eustace followed him abroad,  
And mark'd him pace the village road,  
And listen'd to his horse's tramp,  
Till, by the lessening sound,  
He judged that of the Pictish camp  
Lord Marmion sought the round.  
Wonder it seem'd, in the squire's eyes,  
That one, so wary held, and wise, —  
Of whom 'twas said, he scarce received  
For gospel, what the church believed, —  
Should, stirr'd by idle tale,  
Ride forth in silence of the night,  
As hoping half to meet a sprite,  
Array'd in plate and mail.  
For little did Fitz-Eustace know,  
That passions, in contending flow,  
Unfix the strongest mind;  
Wearied from doubt to doubt to flee,  
We welcome fond credulity,  
Guide confident, though blind.

## XXXI.

Little for this Fitz-Eustace cared,  
But, patient, waited till he heard,  
At distance, prick'd to utmost speed,  
The foot-tramp of a flying steed,  
Come town-ward rushing on;  
First, dead, as if on turf it trode,

Then, clattering on the village road, —  
In other pace than forth he yode,<sup>1</sup>

Return'd Lord Marmion.

Down hastily he sprung from selle,  
And, in his haste, wellnigh he fell;  
To the squire's hand the rein he threw,  
And spoke no word as he withdrew:  
But yet the moonlight did betray,  
The falcon-crest was soil'd with clay;  
And plainly might Fitz-Eustace see,  
By stains upon the charger's knee,  
And his left side, that on the moor  
He had not kept his footing sure.  
Long musing on these wondrous signs,  
At length to rest the squire reclines,  
Broken and short; for still, between,  
Would dreams of terror intervene:  
Eustace did ne'er so blithely mark  
The first notes of the morning lark.

## INTRODUCTION TO CANTO FOURTH.

TO JAMES SKENE, ESQ.

*A shestiel, Ettrick Forest.*

AN ancient Minstrel sagely said,  
"Where is the life which late we led?"  
That motley clown in Arden wood,  
Whom humorous Jaques with envy view'd,  
Not even that clown could amplify,  
On this trite text, so long as I.  
Eleven years we now may tell,  
Since we have known each other well;  
Since, riding side by side, our hand  
First drew the voluntary brand;  
And sure, through many a varied scene,  
Unkindness never came between.

<sup>1</sup> *Yode*, used by old poets for *went*.

Away these winged years have flown,  
 To join the mass of ages gone ;  
 And though deep mark'd, like all below,  
 With chequer'd shades of joy and woe ;  
 Though thou o'er realms and seas hast ranged,  
 Mark'd cities lost, and empires changed,  
 While here, at home, my narrower ken  
 Somewhat of manners saw, and men ;  
 Though varying wishes, hopes, and fears,  
 Fever'd the progress of these years,  
 Yet now, days, weeks, and months but seem  
 The recollection of a dream,  
 So still we glide down to the sea  
 Of fathomless eternity.

Even now it scarcely seems a day,  
 Since first I tuned this idle lay ;  
 A task so often thrown aside,  
 When leisure graver cares denied,  
 That now, November's dreary gale,  
 Whose voice inspir'd my opening tale,  
 That same November gale once more  
 Whirls the dry leaves on Yarrow shore.  
 Their vex'd boughs streaming to the sky,  
 Once more our naked birches sigh,  
 And Blackhouse heights, and Ettrick Pen,  
 Have donn'd their wintry shrouds again :  
 And mountain dark, and flooded mead,  
 Bid us forsake the banks of Tweed.  
 Earlier than wont along the sky,  
 Mix'd with the rack, the snow mists fly ;  
 The shepherd, who in summer sun,  
 Had something of our envy won,  
 As thou with pencil, I with pen,  
 The features traced of hill and glen ;  
 He who, outstretch'd the livelong day,  
 At ease among the heath-flowers lay,  
 View'd the light clouds with vacant look,  
 Or slumber'd o'er his tatter'd book,  
 Or idly busied him to guide  
 His angle o'er the lessen'd tide ; —  
 At midnight now, the snowy plain  
 Finds sterner labor for the swain.



When red hath set the beamless sun,  
Through heavy vapors dark and dun ;  
When the tired ploughman, dry and warm,  
Hears, half asleep, the rising storm  
Hurling the hail, and sleeted rain,  
Against the casement's tinkling pane ;  
The sounds that drive wild deer, and fox,  
To shelter in the brake and rocks,  
Are warnings which the shepherd ask  
To dismal and to dangerous task.  
Oft he looks forth, and hopes, in vain,  
The blast may sink in mellowing rain ;  
Till, dark above, and white below,  
Decided drives the flaky snow,  
And forth the hardy swain must go.  
Long, with dejected look and whine,  
To leave the hearth his dogs repine ;  
Whistling and cheering them to aid,  
Around his back he wreathes the plaid :  
His flock he gathers, and he guides,  
To open downs, and mountain-sides,  
Where fiercest though the tempest blow,  
Least deeply lies the drift below.  
The blast, that whistles o'er the fells,  
Stiffens his locks to icicles ;  
Oft he looks back, while streaming far,  
His cottage window seems a star, —  
Loses its feeble gleam, — and then  
Turns patient to the blast again,  
And, facing to the tempest's sweep,  
Drives through the gloom his lagging sheep.  
If fails his heart, if his limbs fail,  
Benumbing death is in the gale :  
His paths, his landmarks, all unknown,  
Close to the hut, no more his own,  
Close to the aid he sought in vain,  
The morn may find the stiffen'd swain :  
The widow sees, at dawning pale,  
His orphans raise their feeble wail ;  
And, close beside him, in the snow,  
Poor Yarrow, partner of their woe,  
Couches upon his master's breast,  
And licks his cheek to break his rest.

Who envies now the shepherd's lot,  
 His healthy fare, his rural cot,  
 His summer couch by greenwood tree,  
 His rustic kirk's <sup>1</sup> loud revelry,  
 His native hill-notes tuned on high,  
 To Marion of the blithesome eye;  
 His crook, his scrip, his oaten reed,  
 And all Arcadia's golden creed?

Changes not so with us, my Skene,  
 Of human life the varying scene?  
 Our youthful summer oft we see  
 Dance by on wings of game and glee,  
 While the dark storm reserves its rage,  
 Against the winter of our age:  
 As he, the ancient Chief of Troy,  
 His manhood spent in peace and joy;  
 But Grecian fires, and loud alarms,  
 Call'd ancient Priam forth to arms.  
 Then happy those, since each must drain  
 His share of pleasure, share of pain, —  
 Then happy those, beloved of Heaven,  
 To whom the mingled cup is given;  
 Whose lenient sorrows find relief,  
 Whose joys are chasten'd by their grief.  
 And such a lot, my Skene, was thine,  
 When thou, of late, wert doom'd to twine, —  
 Just when thy bridal hour was by, —  
 The cypress with the myrtle tie.  
 Just on thy bride her sire had smiled,  
 And bless'd the union of his child,  
 When love must change its joyous cheer  
 And wipe affection's filial tear.  
 Nor did the actions next his end,  
 Speak more the father than the friend:  
 Scarce had lamented Forbes paid  
 The tribute to his Minstrel's shade;  
 The tale of friendship scarce was told,  
 Ere the narrator's heart was cold —  
 Far may we search before we find  
 A heart so manly and so kind!

<sup>1</sup> The Scottish Harvest-home.

But not around his honor'd urn,  
 Shall friends alone and kindred mourn;  
 The thousand eyes his care had dried,  
 Pour at his name a bitter tide;  
 And frequent falls the grateful dew,  
 For benefits the world ne'er knew.  
 If mortal charity dare claim  
 The Almighty's attributed name,  
 Inscribe above his mouldering clay,  
 "The widow's shield, the orphan's stay."  
 Nor, though it wake thy sorrow, deem  
 My verse intrudes on this sad theme;  
 For sacred was the pen that wrote,  
 "Thy father's friend forget thou not:"  
 And grateful title may I plead,  
 For many a kindly word and deed,  
 To bring my tribute to his grave:—  
 'Tis little — but 'tis all I have.

To thee, perchance, this rambling strain  
 Recalls our summer walks again;  
 When, doing nought, — and, to speak true,  
 Not anxious to find aught to do, —  
 The wild unbounded hills we ranged,  
 While oft our talk its topic changed,  
 And, desultory as our way,  
 Ranged, unconfined, from grave to gay.  
 Even when it flagg'd, as oft will chance,  
 No effort made to break its trance,  
 We could right pleasantly pursue  
 Our sports in social silence too;  
 Thou gravely laboring to portray  
 The blighted oak's fantastic spray;  
 I spelling o'er, with much delight,  
 The legend of that antique Knight,  
 Tirante by name, yclep'd the White.  
 At either's feet a trusty squire,  
 Pandour and Camp,<sup>1</sup> with eyes of fire,  
 Jealous, each other's motions view'd,  
 And scarce suppress'd their ancient feud.

<sup>1</sup> Two dogs; the first belonging to Mr. Skene, and the other to the author.

The laverock whistled from the cloud ;  
 The stream was lively, but not loud ;  
 From the white thorn the May-flower shed  
 Its dewy fragrance round our head :  
 Not Ariel lived more merrily  
 Under the blossom'd bough, than we.

And blithesome nights, too, have been ours,  
 When Winter stript the summer's bowers.  
 Careless we heard, what now I hear,  
 The wild blast sighing deep and drear,  
 When fires were bright, and lamps beam'd gay,  
 And ladies tuned the lovely lay ;  
 And he was held a laggard soul,  
 Who shunn'd to quaff the sparkling bowl.  
 Then he, whose absence we deplore,  
 Who breathes the gales of Devon's shore,  
 The longer miss'd, bewail'd the more ;  
 And thou, and I, and dear-loved Rae,  
 And one whose name I may not say, —  
 For not Mimosa's tender tree  
 Shrinks sooner from the touch than he, —  
 In merry chorus well combined,  
 With laughter drown'd the whistling wind.  
 Mirth was within ; and Care without  
 Might gnaw her nails to hear our shout.  
 Not but amid the buxom scene  
 Some grave discourse might intervene —  
 Of the good horse that bore him best,  
 His shoulder, hoof, and arching crest :  
 For, like mad Tom's, our chiefest care,  
 Was horse to ride, and weapon wear.  
 Such nights we've had ; and, though the game  
 Of manhood be more sober tame,  
 And though the field-day, or the drill,  
 Seem less important now — yet still  
 Such may we hope to share again.  
 The sprightly thought inspires my strain !  
 And mark, how, like a horseman true,  
 Lord Marmion's march I thus renew.

## CANTO FOURTH.

## THE CAMP.

## I.

EUSTACE, I said, did blithely mark  
 The first notes of the merry lark.  
 The lark sang shrill, the cock he crew,  
 And loudly Marmion's bugles blew,  
 And with their light and lively call,  
 Brought groom and yeoman to the stall.  
 Whistling they came, and free of heart,  
 But soon their mood was changed ;  
 Complaint was heard on every part,  
 Of something disarranged.  
 Some clamor'd loud for armor lost ;  
 Some brawl'd and wrangled with the host ;  
 " By Becket's bones," cried one, " I fear,  
 That some false Scot has stolen my spear ! " —  
 Young Blount, Lord Marmion's second squire,  
 Found his steed wet with sweat and mire ;  
 Although the rated horse-boy sware,  
 Last night he dress'd him sleek and fair.  
 While chafed the impatient squire like thunder,  
 Old Hubert shouts, in fear and wonder, —  
 " Help, gentle Blount ! help, comrades all !  
 Bevis lies dying in his stall :  
 To Marmion who the plight dare tell,  
 Of the good steed he loves so well ? "  
 Gaping for fear and ruth, they saw  
 The charger panting on his straw ;  
 Till one who would seem wisest, cried, —  
 " What else but evil could betide,  
 With that cursed Palmer for our guide ?  
 Better we had through mire and bush  
 Been lantern-led by Friar Rush."

## II.

Fitz-Eustace, who the cause but guess'd,  
 Nor wholly understood,

His comrades' clamorous complaints suppress'd ;  
 He knew Lord Marmion's mood.  
 Him, ere he issued forth, he sought,  
 And found deep plunged in gloomy thought,  
 And did his tale display  
 Simply, as if he knew of nought  
 To cause such disarray.  
 Lord Marmion gave attention cold,  
 Nor marvell'd at the wonders told, —  
 Pass'd them as accidents of course,  
 And bade his clarions sound to horse.

## . III.

Young Henry Blount, meanwhile, the cost  
 Had reckon'd with their Scottish host ;  
 And, as the charge he cast and paid,  
 " Ill thou deservest thy hire," he said ;  
 " Dost see, thou knave, my horse's plight ?  
 Fairies have ridden him all the night,  
 And left him in a foam !  
 I trust that soon a conjuring band,  
 With English cross, and blazing brand,  
 Shall drive the devils from this land,  
 To their infernal home :  
 For in this haunted den, I trow,  
 All night they trampled to and fro." —  
 The laughing host look'd on the hire, —  
 " Gramercy, gentle southern squire,  
 And if thou comest among the rest,  
 With Scottish broadsword to be blest,  
 Sharp be the brand, and sure the blow,  
 And short the pang to undergo."  
 Here stay'd their talk, — for Marmion  
 Gave now the signal to set on.  
 The Palmer showing forth the way,  
 They journey'd all the morning day.

## IV.

The green-sward way was smooth and good,  
 Through Humbie's and through Saltoun's wood ;  
 A forest glade, which, varying still,  
 Here gave a view of dale and hill,  
 There narrower closed, till over head

A vaulted screen the branches made.  
 "A pleasant path," Fitz-Eustace said ;  
 "Such as where errant-knights might see  
 Adventures of high chivalry ;  
 Might meet some damsel flying fast,  
     With hair unbound, and looks aghast ;  
 And smooth and level course were here,  
 In her defence to break a spear.  
 Here, too, are twilight nooks and dells ;  
 And oft, in such, the story tells,  
 The damsel kind, from danger freed,  
 Did grateful pay her champion's meed."  
 He spoke to cheer Lord Marmion's mind ;  
 Perchance to show his lore design'd ;  
     For Eustace much had pored  
 Upon a huge romantic tome,  
 In the hall-window of his home,  
 Imprinted at the antique dome  
 Of Caxton, or de Worde,  
 Therefore he spoke, — but spoke in vain,  
 For Marmion answer'd nought again.

## V.

Now sudden, distant trumpets shrill,  
 In notes prolong'd by wood and hill,  
     Were heard to echo far :  
 Each ready archer grasp'd his bow,  
 But by the flourish soon they know,  
     They breathed no point of war.  
 Yet cautious, as in foeman's land,  
 Lord Marmion's order speeds the band,  
     Some opener ground to gain ;  
 And scarce a furlong had they rode,  
 When thinner trees, receding, show'd  
     A little woodland plain.  
 Just in that advantageous glade,  
 The halting troop a line had made,  
 As forth from the opposing shade  
     Issued a gallant train.

## VI.

First came the trumpets, at whose clang  
 So late the forest echoes rang ;



On prancing steeds they forward press'd,  
With scarlet mantle, azure vest ;  
Each at his trump a banner wore,  
Which Scotland's royal scutcheon bore :  
Heralds and pursuivants, by name  
Bute, Islay, Marchmount, Rothsay, came,  
In painted tabards, proudly showing  
Gules, Argent, Or, and Azure glowing,  
Attendant on a King-at-arms,  
Whose hand the armorial truncheon held,  
That feudal strife had often quell'd,  
When wildest its alarms.

## VII.

He was a man of middle age ;  
In aspect manly, grave, and sage,  
As on King's errand come ;  
But in the glances of his eye,  
A penetrating, keen, and sly  
Expression found its home ;  
The flash of that satiric rage,  
Which, bursting on the early stage,  
Branded the vices of the age,  
And broke the keys of Rome.  
On milk-white palfrey forth he paced ;  
His cap of maintenance was graced  
With the proud heron-plume.  
From his steed's shoulder, loin, and breast,  
Silk housings swept the ground,  
With Scotland's arms, device, and crest,  
Embroider'd round and round.  
The double tressure might you see,  
First by Achaius borne,  
The thistle and the fleur-de-lis,  
And gallant unicorn.  
So bright the King's armorial coat,  
That scarce the dazzled eye could note,  
In living colors, blazon'd brave,  
The Lion, which his title gave ;  
A train, which well beseem'd his state,  
But all unarm'd, around him wait.  
Still is thy name in high account,  
And still thy verse has charms,

Sir David Lindesay of the Mount,  
Lord Lion King-at-arms!

## VIII.

Down from his horse did Marmion spring,  
Soon as he saw the Lion-King;  
For well the stately Baron knew  
To him such courtesy was due,  
Whom royal James himself had crown'd,  
And on his temples placed the round  
Of Scotland's ancient diadem :  
And wet his brow with hallow'd wine,  
And on his finger given to shine  
The emblematic gem.  
Their mutual greetings duly made,  
The Lion thus his message said : —  
" Though Scotland's King hath deeply swore  
Ne'er to knit faith with Henry more,  
And strictly hath forbid resort  
From England to his royal court ;  
Yet, for he knows Lord Marmion's name,  
And honors much his warlike fame,  
My liege hath deem'd it shame, and lack  
Of courtesy, to turn him back ;  
And, by his order, I, your guide,  
Must lodging fit and fair provide,  
Till finds King James meet time to see  
The flower of English chivalry."

## IX.

Though inly chafed at this delay,  
Lord Marmion bears it as he may.  
The Palmer, his mysterious guide,  
Beholding thus his place supplied,  
Sought to take leave in vain :  
Strict was the Lion-King's command,  
That none, who rode in Marmion's band,  
Should sever from the train :  
" England has here enow of spies  
In Lady Heron's witching eyes : "  
To Marchmount thus, apart, he said,  
But fair pretext to Marmion made.

The right-hand path they now decline,  
And trace against the stream the Tyne.

## X.

At length up that wild dale they wind,  
Where Crichtoun Castle crowns the bank ;  
For there the Lion's care assign'd  
A lodging meet for Marmion's rank.  
That Castle rises on the steep  
Of the green vale of Tyne :  
And far beneath, where slow they creep,  
From pool to eddy, dark and deep,  
Where alders moist, and willows weep,  
You hear her streams repine.  
The towers in different ages rose ;  
Their various architecture shows  
The builders' various hands ;  
A mighty mass, that could oppose,  
When deadliest hatred fired its foes,  
The vengeful Douglas bands.

## XI.

Crichtoun ! though now thy miry court  
But pens the lazy steer and sheep,  
Thy turrets rude, and totter'd Keep,  
Have been the minstrel's loved resort.  
Oft have I traced, within thy fort,  
Of mouldering shields the mystic sense,  
Scutcheons of honor, or pretence,  
Quarter'd in old armorial sort,  
Remains of rude magnificence.  
Nor wholly yet had time defaced  
Thy lordly gallery fair ;  
Nor yet the stony cord unbraced,  
Whose twisted knots, with roses laced ;  
Adorn thy ruin'd stair.  
Still rises unimpair'd below,  
The court-yard's graceful portico ;  
Above its cornice, row and row  
Of fair hewn facets richly show  
Their pointed diamond form,  
Though there but houseless cattle go,  
To shield them from the storm.

And, shuddering, still may we explore,  
Where oft whilom were captives pent,  
The darkness of thy Massy More;<sup>1</sup>  
Or, from thy grass-grown battlement,  
May trace, in undulating line,  
The sluggish mazes of the Tyne.

## XII.

Another aspect Crichtoun show'd,  
As through its portal Marmion rode;  
But yet 'twas melancholy state  
Received him at the outer gate;  
For none were in the Castle then,  
But women, boys, or aged men.  
With eyes scarce dried, the sorrowing dame,  
To welcome noble Marmion, came;  
Her son, a stripling twelve years old,  
Proffer'd the Baron's rein to hold;  
For each man that could draw a sword  
Had march'd that morning with their lord,  
Earl Adam Hepburn, — he who died  
On Flodden, by his sovereign's side:  
Long may his Lady look in vain!  
She ne'er shall see his gallant train  
Come sweeping back through Crichtoun-Dean.  
'Twas a brave race, before the name  
Of hated Bothwell stain'd their fame.

## XIII.

And here two days did Marmion rest,  
With every rite that honor claims,  
Attended as the King's own guest; —  
Such the command of Royal James,  
Who marshall'd then his land's array,  
Upon the Borough-moor that lay.  
Perchance he would not foeman's eye  
Upon his gathering host should pry,  
Till full prepared was every band  
To march against the English land.  
Here while they dwelt, did Lindesay's wit  
Oft cheer the Baron's moodier fit;

<sup>1</sup> The pit, or prison vault.

And, in his turn, he knew to prize  
 Lord Marmion's powerful mind, and wise, —  
 Train'd in the lore of Rome and Greece,  
 And policies of war and peace.

## XIV.

It chanced, as fell the second night,  
 That on the battlements they walk'd,  
 And, by the slowly fading light,  
 Of varying topics talked ;  
 And, unaware, the Herald-bard  
 Said, Marmion might his toil have spared,  
 In travelling so far ;  
 For that a messenger from heaven  
 In vain to James had counsel given  
 Against the English war :  
 And, closer question'd, thus he told  
 A tale, which chronicles of old  
 In Scottish story have enroll'd : —

## XV.

## SIR DAVID LINDESAY'S TALE.

“Of all the palaces so fair,  
 Built for the royal dwelling,  
 In Scotland far beyond compare,  
 Linlithgow is excelling ;  
 And in its park, in jovial June,  
 How sweet the merry linnet's tune,  
 How blithe the blackbird's lay !  
 The wild-buck bells from ferny brake,  
 The coot dives merry on the lake ;  
 The saddest heart might pleasure take  
 To see all nature gay.  
 But June is, to our Sovereign dear,  
 The heaviest month in all the year :  
 Too well his cause of grief you know,  
 June saw his father's overthrow.  
 Woe to the traitors, who could bring  
 The princely boy against his King !  
 Still in his conscience burns the sting.  
 In offices as strict as Lent,  
 King James's June is ever spent.

## XVI.

“When last this ruthful month was come,  
And in Linlithgow’s holy dome  
The King, as wont, was praying ;  
While, for his royal father’s soul,  
The chanters sung, the bells did toll,  
The Bishop mass was saying —  
For now the year brought round again  
The day the luckless king was slain —  
In Katharine’s aisle the Monarch knelt,  
With sackcloth-shirt and iron belt,  
And eyes with sorrow streaming ;  
Around him, in their stalls of state,  
The Thistle’s Knight-Companions sate,  
Their banners o’er them beaming.  
I too was there, and sooth to tell,  
Bedeafen’d with the jangling knell,  
Was watching where the sunbeams fell,  
Through the stain’d casement gleaming ;  
But, while I marked what next befell,  
It seem’d as I were dreaming.  
Stepp’d from the crowd a ghostly wight,  
In azure gown, with cincture white ;  
His forehead bald, his head was bare,  
Down hung at length his yellow hair. —  
Now, mock me not, when, good my Lord, —  
I pledge to you my knightly word,  
That, when I saw his placid grace,  
His simple majesty of face,  
His solemn bearing, and his pace  
So stately gliding on, —  
Seem’d to me ne’er did limner paint  
So just an image of the Saint,  
Who propp’d the Virgin in her faint, —  
The loved Apostle John !

## XVII.

“He stepp’d before the Monarch’s chair,  
And stood with rustic plainness there,  
And little reverence made ;  
Nor head, nor body, bow’d nor bent,  
But on the desk his arm he leant,  
And words like these he said,

In a low voice — but never tone  
So thrill'd through vein, and nerve, and bone : —  
' My mother sent me from afar,  
Sir King, to warn thee not to war, —  
    Woe waits on thine array ;  
If war thou wilt, of woman fair,  
Her witching wiles and wanton snare,  
James Stuart, doubly warn'd, beware :  
    God keep thee as he may ! ' —  
    The wondering Monarch seem'd to seek  
    For answer, and found none ;  
    And when he raised his head to speak,  
    The monitor was gone.  
The Marshal and myself had cast  
To stop him as he outward pass'd ;  
But, lighter than the whirlwind's blast,  
    He vanish'd from our eyes,  
Like sunbeam on the billow cast,  
    That glances but, and dies."

## XVIII.

While Lindesay told his marvel strange,  
    The twilight was so pale,  
He mark'd not Marmion's color change,  
    While listening to the tale ;  
But, after a suspended pause,  
The Baron spoke : — " Of Nature's laws  
    So strong I held the force,  
That never superhuman cause  
    Could e'er control their course ;  
And, three days since, had judg'd your aim  
Was but to make your guest your game.  
But I have seen, since past the Tweed,  
What much has changed my sceptic creed,  
And made me credit aught. — " He staid,  
And seem'd to wish his words unsaid :  
But, by that strong emotion press'd,  
Which prompts us to unload our breast,  
    Even when discovery's pain,  
To Lindesay did at length unfold  
The tale his village host had told,  
    At Gifford, to his train.



Nought of the Palmer says he there,  
And nought of Constance, or of Clare ;  
The thoughts which broke his sleep, he seems  
To mention but as feverish dreams.

## XIX.

“ In vain,” said he, “ to rest I spread  
My burning limbs, and couch’d my head :  
    Fantastic thoughts returned ;  
And, by their wild dominion led,  
    My heart within me burn’d.  
So sore was the delirious goad,  
I took my steed, and forth I rode,  
And, as the moon shone bright and cold,  
Soon reach’d the camp upon the wold.  
The southern entrance I pass’d through,  
And halted, and my bugle blew.  
Methought an answer met my ear, —  
Yet was the blast so low and drear,  
So hollow, and so faintly blown,  
It might be echo of my own.

## XX.

“ Thus judging, for a little space  
I listen’d, ere I left the place ;  
    But scarce could trust my eyes,  
Nor yet can think they serv’d me true,  
When sudden in the ring I view,  
In form distinct of shape and hue,  
    A mounted champion rise. —  
I’ve fought, Lord-Lion, many a day,  
In single fight, and mix’d affray,  
And ever, I myself may say,  
    Have borne me as a knight ;  
But when this unexpected foe  
Seem’d starting from the gulf below, —  
I care not though the truth I show, —  
    I trembled with affright ;  
And as I placed in rest my spear,  
My hand so shook for very fear,  
    I scarce could couch it right.

## XXI.

"Why need my tongue the issue tell?  
 We ran our course, — my charger fell; —  
 What could he 'gainst the shock of hell? —  
     I roll'd upon the plain.  
 High o'er my head, with threatening hand,  
 The spectre shook his naked brand, —  
     Yet did the worst remain:  
 My dazzled eyes I upward cast, —  
 Not opening hell itself could blast  
     Their sight, like what I saw!  
 Full on his face the moonbeam strook,  
 A face could never be mistook!  
 I knew the stern vindictive look,  
     And held my breath for awe.  
 I saw the face of one who, fled  
 To foreign climes, has long been dead, —  
     I well believe the last;  
 For ne'er, from vizor raised, did stare  
 A human warrior, with a glare  
     So grimly and so ghast.  
 Thrice o'er my head he shook the blade;  
 But when to good Saint George I pray'd,  
 (The first time e'er I ask'd his aid,)  
     He plunged it in the sheath;  
 And, on his courser mounting light,  
 He seem'd to vanish from my sight:  
 The moonbeam droop'd, and deepest night  
     Sunk down upon the heath. —  
     'Twere long to tell what cause I have  
         To know his face, that met me there,  
     Call'd by his hatred from the grave,  
         To cumber upper air:  
 Dead or alive, good cause had he  
 To be my mortal enemy."

## XXII.

Marvell'd Sir David of the Mount;  
 Then, learn'd in story, 'gan recount  
     Such chance had happ'd of old,  
 When once, near Norham, there did fight  
 A spectre fell of fiendish might,

In likeness of a Scottish knight,  
 With Brian Bulmer bold,  
 And train'd him nigh to disallow  
 The aid of his baptismal vow.  
 "And such a phantom, too, 'tis said,  
 With Highland broadsword, targe, and plaid,  
 And fingers red with gore,  
 Is seen in Rothiemurcus glade,  
 Or where the sable pine-trees shade  
 Dark Tomantoul, and Auchnaslaid,  
 Dromouchty, or Glenmore.<sup>1</sup>  
 And yet whate'er such legends say,  
 Of warlike demon, ghost, or fay,  
 On mountain, moor, or plain,  
 Spotless in faith, in bosom bold,  
 True son of chivalry should hold  
 These midnight terrors vain ;  
 For seldom have such spirits power  
 To harm, save in the evil hour,  
 When guilt we meditate within,  
 Or harbor unrepented sin." —  
 Lord Marmion turn'd him half aside,  
 And twice to clear his voice he tried,  
 Then press'd Sir David's hand, —  
 But nought, at length, in answer said,  
 And here their farther converse staid,  
 Each ordering that his band  
 Should bowne them with the rising day,  
 To Scotland's camp to take their way, —  
 Such was the King's command.

## XXIII.

Early they took Dun-Edin's road,  
 And I could trace each step they trode :  
 Hill, brook, nor dell, nor rock, nor stone,  
 Lies on the path to me unknown.  
 Much might it boast of storied lore ;  
 But, passing such digression o'er,  
 Suffice it that their route was laid  
 Across the furzy hills of Braid.

<sup>1</sup> The forest of Glenmore was reputed to be haunted by a spirit called Lhamdearg, or Red-hand.

They pass'd the glen and scanty rill,  
And climb'd the opposing bank, until  
They gain'd the top of Blackford Hill.

## XXIV.

Blackford ! on whose uncultured breast,  
Among the broom, and thorn, and whin,  
A truant-boy, I sought the nest,  
Or listed, as I lay at rest,  
While rose on breezes thin,  
The murmur of the city crowd,  
And, from his steeple jangling loud,  
Saint Giles's mingling din.  
Now, from the summit to the plain,  
Waves all the hill with yellow grain ;  
And o'er the landscape as I look,  
Nought do I see unchanged remain,  
Save the rude cliffs and chiming brook.  
To me they make a heavy moan,  
Of early friendships past and gone.

## XXV.

But different far the change has been,  
Since Marmion, from the crown  
Of Blackford, saw that martial scene  
Upon the bent so brown :  
Thousand pavilions, white as snow,  
Spread all the Borough-moor below,  
Upland, and dale, and down : —  
A thousand, did I say ? I ween,  
Thousands on thousands, there were seen,  
That chequer'd all the heath between  
The streamlet and the town ;  
In crossing ranks extending far,  
Forming a camp irregular ;  
Oft giving way, where still there stood  
Some relics of the old oak wood,  
That darkly huge did intervene,  
And tamed the glaring white with green :  
In these extended lines there lay,  
A martial kingdom's vast array.

## XXVI.

For from Hebudes, dark with rain,  
To eastern Lodon's fertile plain,  
And from the southern Redswire edge,  
To farthest Rosse's rocky ledge ;  
From west to east, from south to north,  
Scotland sent all her warriors forth.  
Marmion might hear the mingled hum  
Of myriads up the mountain come ;  
The horses' tramp, and tingling clank,  
Where chiefs review'd their vassal rank,  
And charger's shrilling neigh ;  
And see the shifting lines advance  
While frequent flash'd, from shield and lance,  
The sun's reflected ray.

## XXVII.

Thin curling in the morning air,  
The wreaths of failing smoke declare  
To embers now the brands decay'd,  
Where the night-watch their fires had made.  
They saw, slow rolling on the plain,  
Full many a baggage-cart and wain,  
And dire artillery's clumsy car,  
By sluggish oxen tugg'd to war ;  
And there were Borthwick's Sisters Seven,<sup>1</sup>  
And culverins which France had given.  
Ill-omen'd gift ! the guns remain  
The conqueror's spoil on Flodden plain.

## XXVIII.

Nor mark'd they less, where in the air  
A thousand streamers flaunted fair ;  
Various in shape, device, and hue,  
Green, sanguine, purple, red, and blue,  
Broad, narrow, swallow-tailed, and square,  
Scroll, pennon, pensil, bandrol,<sup>2</sup> there  
O'er the pavilions flew.

<sup>1</sup> Seven culverins so called, cast by one Borthwick.

<sup>2</sup> Each of these feudal ensigns intimated the different rank of those entitled to display them.

Highest and midmost, was descried  
 The royal banner floating wide ;  
 The staff, a pine-tree, strong and straight,  
 Pitch'd deeply in a massive stone,  
 Which still in memory is shown,  
     Yet bent beneath the standard's weight  
     Whene'er the western wind unroll'd,  
     With toil, the huge and cumbrous fold,  
 And gave to view the dazzling field,  
 Where, in proud Scotland's royal shield,  
     The ruddy lion ramp'd in gold.

## XXIX.

Lord Marmion view'd the landscape bright, —  
 He view'd it with a chief's delight, —  
     Until within him burn'd his heart,  
     And lightning from his eye did part,  
     As on the battle-day;  
     Such glance did falcon never dart,  
     When stooping on his prey.  
 "Oh ! well, Lord-Lion, hast thou said,  
 Thy King from warfare to dissuade  
     Were but a vain essay :  
 For, by St. George, were that host mine,  
 Not power infernal, nor divine,  
 Should once to peace my soul incline,  
 Till I had dimm'd their armor's shine  
     In glorious battle-fray !"  
 Answer'd the Bard, of milder mood, —  
 "Fair is the sight, — and yet 'twere good,  
     That Kings would think withal,  
 When peace and wealth their land has bless'd,  
 'Tis better to sit still at rest,  
     Than rise, perchance to fall."

## XXX.

Still on the spot Lord Marmion stay'd,  
 For fairer scene he ne'er survey'd.  
     When sated with the martial show  
     That peopled all the plain below,  
     The wandering eye could o'er it go,  
     And mark the distant city glow  
     With gloomy splendor red ;

For on the smoke-wreaths, huge and slow,  
 That round her sable turrets flow,  
     The morning beams were shed,  
 And tinged them with a lustre proud,  
     Like that which streaks a thundercloud.  
 Such dusky grandeur clothed the height,  
 Where the huge Castle holds its state,  
     And all the steep slope down,  
 Whose ridgy back heaves to the sky,  
 Piled deep and massy, close and high,  
     Mine own romantic town !  
 But northward far, with purer blaze,  
 On Ochil mountains fell the rays,  
 And as each heathy top they kiss'd,  
 It gleam'd a purple amethyst.  
 Yonder the shores of Fife you saw ;  
 Here Preston-Bay and Berwick-Law :  
     And, broad between them roll'd,  
 The gallant Frith the eye might note,  
 Whose islands on its bosom float,  
     Like emeralds chased in gold.  
 Fitz-Eustace' heart felt closely pent ;  
 As if to give his rapture vent,  
 The spur he to his charger lent,  
     And raised his bridle hand,  
 And making demi-volte in air,  
 Cried, "Where's the coward that would not dare  
     To fight for such a land !"

The Lindesay smiled his joy to see ;  
 Nor Marmion's frown repress'd his glee.

## XXXI.

Thus while they look'd, a flourish proud,  
 Where mingled trump, and clarion loud,  
     And fife, and kettle-drum,  
 And sackbut deep, and psaltery,  
 And war-pipe with discordant cry,  
 And cymbal clattering to the sky,  
 Making wild music bold and high,  
     Did up the mountain come ;  
 The whilst the bells, with distant chime,  
 Merrily toll'd the hour of prime,  
     And thus the Lindesay spoke :



" Thus clamor still the war-notes, when  
 The King to mass his way has ta'en,  
 Or to St. Katharine's of Sienne,  
 Or Chapel of St. Rocque.  
 To you they speak of martial fame;  
 But me remind of peaceful game,  
 When blither was their cheer,  
 Thrilling in Falkland-woods the air,  
 In signal none his steed should spare,  
 But strive which foremost might repair  
 To the downfall of the deer.

## XXXII.

" Nor less," he said, — " when looking forth,  
 I view yon Empress of the North  
 Sit on her hilly throne;  
 Her palace's imperial bowers,  
 Her castle, proof to hostile powers,  
 Her stately halls and holy towers —  
 Nor less," he said, " I moan,  
 To think what woe mischance may bring,  
 And how these merry bells may ring  
 The death-dirge of our gallant King;  
 Or with the larum call  
 The burghers forth to watch and ward,  
 'Gainst southern sack and fires to guard  
 Dun-Edin's leaguer'd wall. —  
 But not for my presaging thought,  
 Dream conquest sure, or cheaply bought!  
 Lord Marmion, I say nay:  
 God is the guider of the field,  
 He breaks the champion's spear and shield, —  
 But thou thyself shalt say,  
 When joins yon host in deadly stowre,  
 That England's dames must weep in bower,  
 Her monks the death-mass sing;  
 For never saw'st thou such a power  
 Led on by such a King." —  
 And now, down winding to the plain,  
 The barriers of the camp they gain,  
 And there they made a stay. —  
 There stays the Minstrel, till he fling

His hand o'er every Border string,  
And fit his heart the pomp to sing,  
Of Scotland's ancient Court and King,  
In the succeeding lay.

## INTRODUCTION TO CANTO FIFTH.

TO GEORGE ELLIS, ESQ.

*Edinburgh.*

WHEN dark December glooms the day,  
And takes our autumn joys away ;  
When short and scant the sunbeam throws,  
Upon the weary waste of snows,  
A cold and profitless regard,  
Like patron on a needy bard ;  
When silvan occupation's done,  
And o'er the chimney rests the gun,  
And hang, in idle trophy, near,  
The game-pouch, fishing-rod, and spear ;  
When wiry terrier, rough and grim,  
And greyhound, with his length of limb,  
And pointer, now employ'd no more,  
Cumber our parlor's narrow floor ;  
When in his stall the impatient steed  
Is long condemn'd to rest and feed ;  
When from our snow-encircled home,  
Scarce cares the hardiest step to roam,  
Since path is none, save that to bring  
The needful water from the spring ;  
When wrinkled news-page, thrice conn'd o'er,  
Beguiles the dreary hour no more,  
And darkling politician, cross'd,  
Inveighs against the lingering post,  
And answering housewife sore complains  
Of carriers' snow-impeded wains ;  
When such the country cheer, I come,  
Well-pleased, to seek our city home ;  
For converse, and for books, to change  
The Forest's melancholy range,

And welcome, with renew'd delight,  
The busy day and social night.

Not here need my desponding rhyme  
Lament the ravages of time,  
As erst by Newark's riven towers,  
And Ettrick stripp'd of forest bowers.  
True, — Caledonia's Queen is changed,  
Since on her dusky summit ranged,  
Within its steepy limits pent,  
By bulwark, line, and battlement,  
And flanking towers, and laky flood,  
Guarded and garrison'd she stood,  
Denying entrance or resort,  
Save at each tall embattled port ;  
Above whose arch, suspended, hung  
Portcullis spiked with iron prong.  
That long is gone, — but not so long,  
Since, early closed, and opening late,  
Jealous revolved the studded gate,  
Whose task, from eve to morning tide,  
A wicket churlishly supplied.  
Stern then, and steel-girt was thy brow,  
Dun-Edin ! O, how alter'd now,  
When safe amid thy mountain court  
Thou sit'st, like Empress at her sport,  
And liberal, unconfined, and free,  
Flinging thy white arms to the sea,  
For thy dark cloud, with umber'd lower,  
That hung o'er cliff, and lake, and tower,  
Thou gleam'st against the western ray  
Ten thousand lines of brighter day.

Not she, the 'Championess of old,  
In Spenser's magic tale enroll'd,  
She for the charmed spear renown'd,  
Which forced each knight to kiss the ground, —  
Not she more changed, when, placed at rest,  
What time she was Malbecco's guest,<sup>1</sup>  
She gave to flow her maiden vest ;

<sup>1</sup> See "The Fairy Queen," book iii. canto ix.

When from the corslet's grasp relieved,  
Free to the sight her bosom heaved ;  
Sweet was her blue eye's modest smile,  
Erst hidden by the aventayle ;  
And down her shoulders graceful roll'd  
Her locks profuse, of paly gold.  
They who whilom, in midnight fight,  
Had marvell'd at her matchless might,  
No less her maiden charms approved,  
But looking liked, and liking loved.  
The sight could jealous pangs beguile,  
And charm Malbecco's cares awhile ;  
And he, the wandering Squire of Dames,  
Forgot his Columbella's claims,  
And passion, erst unknown, could gain  
The breast of blunt Sir Satyrane ;  
Nor durst light Paridel advance,  
Bold as he was, a looser glance.  
She charm'd, at once, and tamed the heart,  
Incomparable Britomarte !

So thou, fair City ! disarray'd  
Of battled wall, and rampart's aid,  
As stately seem'st, but lovelier far  
Than in that panoply of war.  
Nor deem that from thy fenceless throne  
Strength and security are flown ;  
Still, as of yore, Queen of the North !  
Still canst thou send thy children forth.  
Ne'er readier at alarm-bell's call  
Thy burghers rose to man thy wall,  
Than now, in danger, shall be thine,  
Thy dauntless voluntary line ;  
For fosse and turret proud to stand,  
Their breasts the bulwarks of the land.  
Thy thousands, trained to martial toil,  
Full red would stain their native soil,  
Ere from thy mural crown there fell  
The slightest knosp, or pinnacle.  
And if it come, — as come it may,  
Dun-Edin ! that eventful day, —  
Renown'd for hospitable deed,  
That virtue much with Heaven may plead,

In patriarchal times whose care  
 Descending angels deign'd to share ;  
 That claim may wrestle blessings down  
 On those who fight for The Good Town,  
 Destined in every age to be  
 Refuge of injured royalty ;  
 Since first, when conquering York arose,  
 To Henry meek she gave repose.  
 Till late, with wonder, grief, and awe,  
 Great Bourbon's relics, sad she saw.

Truce to these thoughts ! — for, as they rise,  
 How gladly I avert mine eyes,  
 Bodings, or true or false, to change,  
 For Fiction's fair romantic range,  
 Or for Tradition's dubious light,  
 That hovers 'twixt the day and night :  
 Dazzling alternately and dim,  
 Her wavering lamp I'd rather trim,  
 Knights, squires, and lovely dames, to see,  
 Creation of my fantasy,  
 Than gaze abroad on reeky fen,  
 And make of mists invading men.—  
 Who loves not more the night of June  
 Than dull December's gloomy noon ?  
 The moonlight than the fog of frost ?  
 And can we say, which cheats the most ?

But who shall teach my heart to gain  
 A sound of the romantic strain,  
 Whose Anglo-Norman tones whilere  
 Could win the royal Henry's ear,  
 Famed Beauclerc call'd for that he loved  
 The minstrel, and his lay approved ?  
 Who shall these lingering notes redeem,  
 Decaying on Oblivion's stream ;  
 Such notes as from the Breton tongue  
 Marie translated, Blondel sung ? —  
 O ! born, Time's ravage to repair,  
 And make the dying Muse thy care ;  
 Who, when his scythe her hoary foe  
 Was poising for the final blow,

The weapon from his hand could wring,  
And break his glass, and shear his wing,  
And bid, reviving in his strain,  
The gentle poet live again ;  
Thou, who canst give to lightest lay  
An unpedantic moral gay,  
Nor less the dullest theme bid flit  
On wings of unexpected wit ;  
In letters as in life approved,  
Example honor'd, and beloved, —  
Dear ELLIS ! to the bard impart  
A lesson of thy magic art,  
To win at once the head and heart, —  
At once to charm, instruct, and mend,  
My guide, my pattern, and my friend !

Such minstrel lesson to bestow  
Be long thy pleasing task, — but, O !  
No more by thy example teach,  
— What few can practise, all can preach, —  
With even patience to endure  
Lingering disease, and painful cure,  
And boast affliction's pangs subdued  
By mild and manly fortitude.  
Enough, the lesson has been given :  
Forbid the repetition, Heaven !

Come listen, then ! for thou hast known,  
And loved the Minstrel's varying tone,  
Who, like his Border sires of old,  
Waked a wild measure rude and bold,  
Till Windsor's oaks, and Ascot plain,  
With wonder heard the northern strain.  
Come listen ! bold in thy applause,  
The Bard shall scorn pedantic laws ;  
And, as the ancient art could stain  
Achievements on the storied pane,  
Irregularly traced and plann'd,  
But yet so glowing and so grand, —  
So shall he strive, in changeful hue,  
Field, feast, and combat, to renew,  
And loves, and arms, and harpers' glee,  
And all the pomp of chivalry.

## CANTO FIFTH.

## THE COURT.

## I.

THE train has left the hills of Braid ;  
The barrier guard have open made  
(So Lindesay bade) the palisade,  
That closed the tented ground ;  
Their men the warders backward drew,  
And carried pikes as they rode through,  
Into its ample bound.  
Fast ran the Scottish warriors there,  
Upon the Southern band to stare.  
And envy with their wonder rose,  
To see such well-appointed foes ;  
Such length of shafts, such mighty bows,  
So huge, that many simply thought,  
But for a vaunt such weapons wrought ;  
And little deem'd their force to feel,  
Through links of mail, and plates of steel,  
When rattling upon Flodden vale,  
The cloth-yard arrows flew like hail.

## II.

Nor less did Marmion's skilful view  
Glance every line and squadron through ;  
And much he marvell'd one small land  
Could marshal forth such various band :  
For men-at-arms were here,  
Heavily sheathed in mail and plate,  
Like iron towers for strength and weight,  
On Flemish steeds of bone and height,  
With battle-axe and spear.  
Young knights and squires, a lighter train,  
Practised their chargers on the plain,  
By aid of leg, of hand, and rein,  
Each warlike feat to show,  
To pass, to wheel, the croupe to gain,  
And high curvett, that not in vain  
The sword sway might descend amain  
On foeman's casque below.



He saw the hardy burghers there  
March arm'd, on foot, with faces bare,  
For vizor they wore none,  
Nor waving plume, nor crest of knight;  
But burnish'd were their corslets bright,  
Their brigantines, and gorgets light,  
Like very silver shone.  
Long pikes they had for standing fight,  
Two-handed swords they wore,  
And many wielded mace of weight,  
And bucklers bright they bore.

## III.

On foot the yeoman too, but dress'd  
In his steel-jack, a swarthy vest,  
With iron quilted well;  
Each at his back (a slender store)  
His forty days' provision bore,  
As feudal statutes tell.  
His arms were halbert, axe, or spear,  
A cross-bow there, a hagbut here,  
A dagger-knife, and brand.  
Sober he seem'd and sad of cheer,  
As loath to leave his cottage dear,  
And march to foreign strand;  
Or musing, who would guide his steer,  
To till the fallow land.  
Yet deem not in his thoughtful eye  
Did aught of dastard terror lie;  
More dreadful far his ire,  
Than theirs, who, scorning danger's name,  
In eager mood to battle came,  
Their valor like light straw on flame,  
A fierce but fading fire.

## IV.

Not so the Borderer : — bred to war,  
He knew the battle's din afar,  
And joy'd to hear it swell.  
His peaceful day was slothful ease;  
Nor harp, nor pipe, his ear could please  
Like the loud slogan yell.

On active steed, with lance and blade,  
The light-arm'd pricker plied his trade, —

Let nobles fight for fame ;  
Let vassals follow where they lead,  
Burghers, to guard their townships, bleed,

But war's the Borderer's game.  
Their gain, their glory, their delight,  
To sleep the day, maraud the night,

O'er mountain, moss, and moor ;  
Joyful to fight they took their way,  
Scarce caring who might win the day,  
Their booty was secure.

These, as Lord Marmion's train pass'd by,  
Look'd on at first with careless eye,  
Nor marvell'd aught, well taught to know  
The form and force of English bow.  
But when they saw the Lord array'd  
In splendid arms, and rich brocade,  
Each Borderer to his kinsman said, —

“Hist, Ringan! seest thou there!  
Canst guess which road they'll homeward ride?—  
O! could we but on Border side,  
By Eusedale glen, or Liddell's tide,

Beset a prize so fair!  
That fangless Lion, too, their guide,  
Might chance to lose his glistering hide;  
Brown Maudlin, of that doublet pied,  
Could make a kirtle rare.”

## V.

Next, Marmion mark'd the Celtic race,  
Of different language, form, and face,

A various race of man ;  
Just then the Chiefs their tribes array'd,  
And wild and garish semblance made,  
The chequer'd trews, and belted plaid,  
And varying notes the war-pipes bray'd,  
To every varying clan ;

Wild through their red or sable hair  
Look'd out their eyes with savage stare,

On Marmion as he pass'd ;  
Their legs above the knee were bare ;

Their frame was sinewy, short, and spare,  
And harden'd to the blast ;  
Of taller race, the chiefs they own  
Were by the eagle's plumage known.  
The hunted Red-deer's undress'd hide  
Their hairy buskins well supplied ;  
The graceful bonnet deck'd their head :  
Back from their shoulders hung the plaid ;  
A broadsword of unwieldy length,  
A dagger proved for edge and strength,  
A studded targe they wore,  
And quivers, bows, and shafts, — but O !  
Short was the shaft, and weak the bow,  
To that which England bore.  
The Isles-men carried at their backs  
The ancient Danish battle-axe.  
They raised a wild and wondering cry,  
As with his guide rode Marmion by.  
Loud were their clamoring tongues, as when  
The clanging sea-fowl leave the fen,  
And, with their cries discordant mix'd,  
Grumbled and yell'd the pipes betwixt.

## VI.

Thus through the Scottish camp they pass'd,  
And reach'd the City gate at last,  
Where all around, a wakeful guard,  
Arm'd burghers kept their watch and ward.  
Well had they cause of jealous fear,  
When lay encamp'd, in field so near,  
The Borderer and the Mountaineer.  
As through the bustling streets they go,  
All was alive with martial show :  
At every turn, with dinning clang,  
The armorer's anvil clash'd and rang ;  
Or toil'd the swarthy smith, to wheel  
The bar that arms the charger's heel ;  
Or axe, or falchion, to the side  
Of jarring grindstone was applied.  
Page, groom, and squire, with hurrying pace,  
Through street, and lane, and market-place,  
Bore lance, or casque, or sword :

While burghers, with important face,  
 Described each new-come lord,  
 Discuss'd his lineage, told his name,  
 His following, and his warlike fame.  
 The Lion led to lodging meet,  
 Which high o'erlook'd the crowded street ;  
 There must the Baron rest,  
 Till past the hour of vesper tide,  
 And then to Holy-Rood must ride, —  
 Such was the King's behest.  
 Meanwhile the Lion's care assigns  
 A banquet rich, and costly wines,  
 To Marmion and his train ;  
 And when the appointed hour succeeds,  
 The Baron dons his peaceful weeds,  
 And following Lindesay as he leads,  
 The palace-halls they gain.

## VII.

Old Holy-rood rung merrily,  
 That night, with wassell, mirth, and glee :  
 King James within her princely bower  
 Feasted the Chiefs of Scotland's power,  
 Summon'd to spend the parting hour ;  
 For he had charged, that his array  
 Should southward march by break of day.  
 Well loved that splendid monarch aye  
 The banquet and the song,  
 By day the tourney, and by night  
 The merry dance, traced fast and light,  
 The maskers quaint, the pageant bright,  
 The revel loud and long.  
 This feast outshone his banquets past ;  
 It was his blithest — and his last.  
 The dazzling lamps, from gallery gay,  
 Cast on the Court a dancing ray ;  
 Here to the harp did minstrels sing ;  
 There ladies touched a softer string ;  
 With long-ear'd cap, and motley vest,  
 The licensed fool retail'd his jest ;  
 His magic tricks the juggler plied ;  
 At dice and draughts the gallants vied ;

While some, in close recess apart,  
 Courted the ladies of their heart,  
   Nor courted them in vain ;  
 For often, in the parting hour,  
 Victorious Love asserts his power  
   O'er coldness and disdain ;  
 And flinty is her heart, can view  
 To battle march a lover true —  
 Can hear, perchance, his last adieu,  
   Nor own her share of pain.

## VIII.

Through this mix'd crowd of glee and game,  
 The King to greet Lord Marmion came,  
   While, reverent, all made room.  
 An easy task it was, I trow,  
 King James's manly form to know,  
 Although, his courtesy to show,  
 He doff'd, to Marmion bending low,  
   His broider'd cap and plume.  
 For royal was his garb and mien,  
   His cloak, of crimson velvet piled,  
   Trimm'd with the fur of marten wild ;  
 His vest of changeful satin sheen,  
   The dazzled eye beguiled ;  
 His gorgeous collar hung adown,  
 Wrought with the badge of Scotland's crown,  
 The thistle brave, of old renown :  
 His trusty blade, Toledo right,  
 Descended from a baldrich bright ;  
 White were his buskins, on the heel  
 His spurs inlaid of gold and steel ;  
 His bonnet, all of crimson fair,  
 Was button'd with a ruby rare :  
 And Marmion deem'd he ne'er had seen  
 A prince of such a noble mien.

## IX.

The Monarch's form was middle size ;  
 For feat of strength, or exercise,  
   Shaped in proportion fair ;  
 And hazel was his eagle eye,

And auburn of the darkest dye,  
 His short curl'd beard and hair.  
 Light was his footstep in the dance,  
 And firm his stirrup in the lists ;  
 And, oh ! he had that merry glance,  
 That seldom lady's heart resists.  
 Lightly from fair to fair he flew,  
 And loved to plead, lament, and sue ; —  
 Suit lightly won, and short-lived pain,  
 For monarchs seldom sigh in vain.  
 I said he joy'd in banquet bower ;  
 But, 'mid his mirth, 'twas often strange,  
 How suddenly his cheer would change,  
 His look o'ercast and lower,  
 If, in a sudden turn, he felt  
 The pressure of his iron belt,  
 That bound his breast in penance pain,  
 In memory of his father slain.  
 Even so 'twas strange how, evermore,  
 Soon as the passing pang was o'er  
 Forward he rush'd, with double glee,  
 Into the stream of revelry :  
 Thus, dim-seen object of affright  
 Startles the courser in his flight,  
 And half he halts, half springs aside ;  
 But feels the quickening spur applied,  
 And, straining on the tighten'd rein,  
 Scours doubly swift o'er hill and plain.

## X.

O'er James's heart, the courtiers say,  
 Sir Hugh the Heron's wife held sway :  
 To Scotland's Court she came,  
 To be a hostage for her lord,  
 Who Cessford's gallant heart had gored ;  
 And with the King to make accord,  
 Had sent his lovely dame.  
 Nor to that lady free alone  
 Did the gay King allegiance own ;  
 For the fair Queen of France  
 Sent him a turquois ring and glove,  
 And charged him, as her knight and love,  
 For her to break a lance ;

And strike three strokes with Scottish brand,  
 And march three miles on Southron land,  
 And bid the banners of his band

In English breezes dance.

And thus, for France's Queen he drest  
 His manly limbs in mailed vest;  
 And thus admitted English fair  
 His inmost counsels still to share;  
 And thus, for both, he madly plann'd  
 The ruin of himself and land!

And yet, the sooth to tell,  
 Nor England's fair, nor France's Queen,  
 Were worth one pearl-drop, bright and sheen,  
 From Margaret's eyes that fell,—  
 His own Queen Margaret, who, in Lithgow's bower,  
 All lonely sat, and wept the weary hour.

# XI.

The Queen sits lone in Lithgow pile,  
 And weeps the weary day,  
 The war against her native soil,  
 Her Monarch's risk in battle broil: —  
 And in gay Holy-rood, the while,  
 Dame Heron rises with a smile

Upon the harp to play.  
 Fair was her rounded arm, as o'er  
 The strings her fingers flew;  
 And as she touch'd and tuned them all,  
 Ever her bosom's rise and fall  
 Was plainer given to view;  
 For, all for heat, was laid aside  
 Her wimple, and her hood untied.  
 And first she pitch'd her voice to sing,  
 Then glanced her dark eye on the King,  
 And then around the silent ring;  
 And laugh'd, and blush'd, and oft did say  
 Her pretty oath, by Yea, and Nay,  
 She could not, would not, durst not play!  
 At length, upon the harp, with glee,  
 Mingled with arch simplicity,  
 A soft, yet lively, air she rung,  
 While thus the wily lady sung: —



## XII.

## LOCHINVAR.

## LADY HERON'S SONG.

O, young Lochinvar is come out of the west,  
Through all the wide border his steed was the best ;  
And save his good broadsword, he weapons had none,  
He rode all unarm'd, and he rode all alone.  
So faithful in love, and so dauntless in war,  
There never was knight like the young Lochinvar.

He staid not for brake, and he stopp'd not for stone,  
He swam the Eske river where ford there was none ;  
But ere he alighted at Netherby gate,  
The bride had consented, the gallant came late ;  
For a laggard in love, and a dastard in war,  
Was to wed the fair Ellen of brave Lochinvar.

So boldly he enter'd the Netherby Hall,  
Among bride's-men, and kinsmen, and brothers, and all :  
Then spoke the bride's father, his hand on his sword,  
(For the poor craven bridegroom said never a word,)  
" O come ye in peace here, or come ye in war,  
Or to dance at our bridal, young Lord Lochinvar ? " —

" I long woo'd your daughter, my suit you denied ; —  
Love swells like the Solway, but ebbs like its tide —  
And now am I come, with this lost love of mine,  
To lead but one measure, drink one cup of wine.  
There are maidens in Scotland more lovely by far,  
That would gladly be bride to the young Lochinvar."

The bride kiss'd the goblet : the knight took it up,  
He quaff'd off the wine, and he threw down the cup.  
She look'd down to blush, and she look'd up to sigh,  
With a smile on her lips, and a tear in her eye,  
He took her soft hand, ere her mother could bar, —  
" Now tread we a measure ! " said young Lochinvar.

So stately his form, and so lovely her face,  
That never a hall such a galliard did grace ;  
While her mother did fret, and her father did fume,  
And the bridgroom stood dangling his bonnet and plume ;  
And the bride-maidens whisper'd, " 'Twere better by far,  
To have match'd our fair cousin with young Lochinvar."

One touch to her hand, and one word in her ear,  
 When they reach'd the hall-door, and the charger  
     stood near ;  
 So light to the croupe the fair lady he swung,  
 So light to the saddle before her he sprung !  
 " She is won ! we are gone, over bank, bush, and scaur ;  
 They'll have fleet steeds that follow," quoth young  
     Lochinvar.

There was mounting 'mong Græmes of the Netherby  
     clan ;  
 Forsters, Fenwicks, and Musgraves, they rode and  
     they ran :  
 There was racing and chasing, on Cannobie Lee,  
 But the lost bride of Netherby ne'er did they see.  
 So daring in love, and so dauntless in war,  
 Have ye e'er heard of gallant like young Lochinvar ?

## XIII.

The monarch o'er the siren hung,  
 And beat the measure as she sung ;  
 And, pressing closer, and more near,  
 He whisper'd praises in her ear.  
 In loud applause the courtiers vied ;  
 And ladies wink'd, and spoke aside.  
     The witching dame to Marmion threw  
     A glance, where seem'd to reign  
     The pride that claims applauses due,  
     And of her royal conquest too,  
     A real or feign'd disdain :  
 Familiar was the look, and told,  
 Marmion and she were friends of old.  
 The King observed their meeting eyes,  
 With something like displeased surprise ;  
 For monarchs ill can rivals brook,  
 Even in a word, or smile, or look.  
 Straight took he forth the parchment broad,  
 Which Marmion's high commission show'd :  
 " Our Borders sack'd by many a raid,  
 Our peaceful liegemen robb'd," he said ;  
 " On day of truce our Warden slain,  
 Stout Barton kill'd, his vassals ta'en —

Unworthy were we here to reign,  
Should these for vengeance cry in vain ;  
Our full defiance, hate, and scorn,  
Our herald has to Henry borne."

## XIV.

He paused, and led where Douglas stood,  
And with stern eye the pageant view'd :  
I mean that Douglas, sixth of yore,  
Who coronet of Angus bore,  
And, when his blood and heart were high,  
Did the third James in camp defy,  
And all his minions led to die

On Lauder's dreary flat ;  
Princes and favorites long grew tame,  
And trembled at the homely name  
Of Archibald Bell-the-Cat :

The same who left the dusky vale  
Of Hermitage in Liddisdale,

Its dungeons, and its towers,  
Where Bothwell's turrets brave the air,  
And Bothwell bank is blooming fair,

To fix his princely bowers.  
Though now, in age, he had laid down  
His armor for the peaceful gown,

And for a staff his brand,  
Yet often would flash forth the fire,  
That could, in youth, a monarch's ire  
And minion's pride withstand ;

And even that day, at council board,  
Unapt to soothe his sovereign's mood,  
Against the war had Angus stood,  
And chafed his royal lord.

## XV.

His giant form, like ruin'd tower,  
Though fall'n its muscles' brawny vaunt,  
Huge-boned, and tall, and grim, and gaunt,  
Seem'd o'er the gaudy scene to lower :  
His locks and beard in silver grew ;  
His eyebrows kept their sable hue.  
Near Douglas when the Monarch stood,  
His bitter speech he thus pursued :

“ Lord Marmion, since these letters say,  
 That in the North you needs must stay  
 While slightest hopes of peace remain,  
 Uncourteous speech it were, and stern,  
 To say — Return to Lindisfarne,  
 Until my herald come again. —  
 Then rest you on Tantallon Hold;  
 Your host shall be the Douglas bold, —  
 A chief unlike his sires of old.  
 He wears their motto on his blade,  
 Their blazon o’er his towers display’d;  
 Yet loves his sovereign to oppose,  
 More than to face his country’s foes.

And, I bethink me, by St. Stephen,  
 But e’en to me this morn was given  
 A prize, the first-fruits of the war,  
 Ta’en by a galley from Dunbar,  
 A bevy of the maids of Heaven.  
 Under your guard, these holy maids  
 Shall safe return to cloister shades,  
 And, while they at Tantallon stay,  
 Requiem for Cochran’s soul may say.”  
 And, with the slaughter’d favorite’s name,  
 Across the Monarch’s brow there came  
 A cloud of ire, remorse and shame.

## XVI.

In answer nought could Angus speak;  
 His proud heart swell’d wellnigh to break:  
 He turn’d aside, and down his cheek

A burning tear there stole.  
 His hand the monarch sudden took,  
 That sight his kind heart could not brook:

“ Now, by the Bruce’s soul,  
 Angus, my hasty speech forgive!  
 For sure as doth his spirit live,  
 As he said of the Douglas old,

I well may say of you, —  
 That never King did subject hold,  
 In speech more free, in war more bold,  
 More tender and more true:  
 Forgive me, Douglas, once again.” —  
 And, while the King his hand did strain,

The old man's tears fell down like rain.  
 To seize the moment Marmion tried,  
 And whisper'd to the King aside :  
 " Oh ! let such tears unwonted plead  
 For respite short from dubious deed !  
 A child will weep a bramble's smart,  
 A maid to see her sparrow part,  
 A stripling for a woman's heart :  
 But woe awaits a country, when  
 She sees the tears of bearded men.  
 Then, oh ! what omen, dark and high,  
 When Douglas wets his manly eye ! "

## XVII.

Displeased was James, that stranger view'd  
 And tamper'd with his changing mood.  
 " Laugh those that can, weep those that may,"  
 Thus did the fiery Monarch say,  
 " Southward I march by break of day ;  
 And if within Tantallon strong,  
 The good Lord Marmion tarries long,  
 Perchance our meeting next may fall  
 At Tamworth, in his castle-hall." —  
 The haughty Marmion felt the taunt,  
 And answer'd, grave, the royal vaunt :  
 " Much honor'd were my humble home,  
 If in its halls King James should come ;  
 But Nottingham has archers good,  
 And Yorkshire men are stern of mood ;  
 Northumbrian prickers wild and rude.  
 On Derby hills the paths are steep ;  
 In Ouse and Tyne the fords are deep ;  
 And many a banner will be torn,  
 And many a knight to earth be borne,  
 And many a sheaf of arrows spent,  
 Ere Scotland's King shall cross the Trent :  
 Yet pause, brave Prince, while yet you may ! " —  
 The Monarch lightly turn'd away,  
 And to his nobles loud did call. —  
 " Lords, to the dance, — a hall ! a hall ! " <sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The ancient cry to make room for a dance, or pageant.

Himself his cloak and sword flung by,  
 And led Dame Heron gallantly;  
 And minstrels, at the royal order,  
 Rung out — “Blue Bonnets o’er the Border.”

## XVIII.

Leave we these revels now, to tell  
 What to St. Hilda’s maids befell,  
 Whose galley, as they sail’d again  
 To Whitby, by a Scot was ta’en.  
 Now at Dun-Edin did they bide,  
 Till James should of their fate decide;  
     And soon, by his command,  
 Were gently summon’d to prepare  
 To journey under Marmion’s care,  
 As escort honor’d, safe, and fair,  
     Again to English land.  
 The Abbess told her chaplet o’er,  
 Nor knew which saint she should implore;  
 For, when she thought of Constance sore  
     She fear’d Lord Marmion’s mood.  
 And judge what Clara must have felt!  
 The sword, that hung in Marmion’s belt,  
     Had drunk De Wilton’s blood.  
 Unwittingly, King James had given,  
     As guard to Whitby’s shades,  
 The man most dreaded under Heaven  
     By these defenceless maids:  
 Yet what petition could avail,  
 Or who would listen to the tale  
 Of woman, prisoner, and nun,  
 ’Mid bustle of a war begun?  
 They deem’d it hopeless to avoid  
 The convoy of their dangerous guide.

## XIX.

Their lodgings, so the king assign’d,  
 To Marmion’s, as their guardian, joined;  
 And thus it fell, that, passing nigh,  
 The Palmer caught the Abbess’ eye,  
     Who warned him by a scroll,  
 She had a secret to reveal,



That much concern'd the Church's weal,  
And health of sinner's soul ;  
And, with deep charge of secrecy,  
She named a place to meet,  
Within an open balcony,  
That hung from dizzy pitch, and high,  
Above the stately street ;  
To which, as common to each home,  
At night they might in secret come.

## XX.

At night, in secret, there they came,  
The Palmer and the holy Dame.  
The moon among the clouds rose high,  
And all the city hum was by.  
Upon the street, where late before  
Did din of war and warriors roar,  
You might have heard a pebble fall,  
A beetle hum, a cricket sing,  
An owlet flap his boding wing  
On Giles's steeple tall.  
The antique buildings, climbing high,  
Whose Gothic frontlets sought the sky,  
Were here wrapt deep in shade ;  
There on their brows the moonbeam broke,  
Through the faint wreaths of silvery smoke,  
And on the casements play'd.  
And other light was none to see,  
Save torches gliding far,  
Before some chieftain of degree,  
Who left the royal revelry  
To bowne him for the war. —  
A solemn scene the Abbess chose ;  
A solemn hour, her secret to disclose.

## XXI.

"O, holy Palmer !" she began, —  
"For sure he must be sainted man,  
Whose blessed feet have trod the ground  
Where the Redeemer's tomb is found, —  
For His dear Church's sake, my tale  
Attend, nor deem of light avail,



Though I must speak of worldly love, —  
 How vain to those who wed above ! —  
 De Wilton and Lord Marmion woo'd-  
 Clara de Clare, of Gloster's blood ;  
 (Idle it were of Whitby's dame,  
 To say of that same blood I came ; )  
 And once, when jealous rage was high,  
 Lord Marmion said despiteously,  
 Wilton was traitor in his heart,  
 And had made league with Martin Swart,  
 When he came here on Simnel's part ;  
 And only cowardice did restrain  
 His rebel aid on Stokefield's plain, —  
 And down he threw his glove : — the thing  
 Was tried, as wont, before the King ;  
 Where frankly did De Wilton own,  
 That Swart in Gueldres he had known ;  
 And that between them then there went  
 Some scroll of courteous compliment.  
 For this he to his castle sent ;  
 But when his messenger return'd,  
 Judge how De Wilton's fury burn'd !  
 For in his packet there were laid  
 Letters that claim'd disloyal aid,  
 And proved King Henry's cause betray'd !  
 His fame, thus blighted, in the field  
 He strove to clear, by spear and shield ; —  
 To clear his fame in vain he strove,  
 For wondrous are His ways above !  
 Perchance some form was unobserved ;  
 Perchance in prayer, or faith, he swerved ;  
 Else how could guiltless champion quail,  
 Or how the blessed ordeal fail ?

## XXII.

" His squire, who now De Wilton saw  
 As recreant doom'd to suffer law,  
     Repentant, own'd in vain,  
 That, while he had the scrolls in care,  
 A stranger maiden, passing fair,  
 Had drench'd him with a beverage rare ;  
     His words no faith could gain.

With Clare alone he credence won,  
 Who, rather than wed Marmion,  
 Did to Saint Hilda's shrine repair,  
 To give our house her livings fair,  
 And die a vestal vot'ress there.  
 The impulse from the earth was given,  
 But bent her to the paths of heaven.  
 A purer heart, a lovelier maid,  
 Ne'er shelter'd her in Whitby's shade,  
 No, not since Saxon Edelfled;  
     Only one trace of earthly strain,  
     That for her lover's loss  
 She cherishes a sorrow vain,  
     And murmurs at the cross. —  
 And then her heritage ; — it goes  
     Along the banks of Tame ;  
 Deep fields of grain the reaper mows,  
 In meadows rich the heifer lows,  
 The falconer and huntsman knows  
     Its woodlands for the game.  
 Shame were it to Saint Hilda dear,  
 And I, her humble vot'ress here,  
     Should do a deadly sin,  
 Her temple spoil'd before mine eyes,  
 If this false Marmion such a prize  
     By my consent should win ;  
 Yet hath our boisterous Monarch sworn,  
 That Clare shall from our house be torn ;  
 And grievous cause have I to fear,  
 Such mandate doth Lord Marmion bear.

## XXIII.

"Now, prisoner, helpless, and betray'd  
 To evil power, I claim thine aid,  
     By every step that thou hast trod  
 To holy shrine and grotto dim,  
 By every martyr's tortured limb,  
 By angel, saint, and seraphim,  
     And by the Church of God !  
 For mark : — When Wilton was betray'd,  
 And with his squire forged letters laid,  
 She was, alas ! that sinful maid  
     By whom the deed was done, —

O! shame and horror to be said! —  
 She was a perjured nun!  
 No clerk in all the land, like her,  
 Traced quaint and varying character.  
 Perchance you may a marvel deem,  
 That Marmion's paramour  
 (For such vile thing she was) should scheme  
 Her lover's nuptial hour;  
 But o'er him thus she hoped to gain,  
 As privy to his honor's stain,  
 Illimitable power:  
 For this she secretly retain'd  
 Each proof that might the plot reveal,  
 Instructions with his hand and seal;  
 And thus Saint Hilda deign'd,  
 Through sinners' perfidy impure,  
 Her house's glory to secure,  
 And Clare's immortal weal!

## XXIV.

"'Twere long, and needless, here to tell,  
 How to my hand these papers fell;  
 With me they must not stay.  
 Saint Hilda keep her Abbess true!  
 Who knows what outrage he might do,  
 While journeying by the way? —  
 O, blessed Saint, if e'er again  
 I venturous leave thy calm domain,  
 To travel or by land or main,  
 Deep penance may I pay! —  
 Now, saintly Palmer, mark my prayer:  
 I give this packet to thy care,  
 For thee to stop they will not dare;  
 And O! with cautious speed,  
 To Wolsey's hand the papers bring,  
 That he may show them to the King:  
 And, for thy well-earn'd meed,  
 Thou holy man, at Whitby's shrine  
 A weekly mass shall still be thine,  
 While priests can sing and read. —  
 What ails't thou? Speak!" — For as he took  
 The charge, a strong emotion shook  
 His frame; and, ere reply,

They heard a faint, yet shrilly tone,  
 Like distant clarion feebly blown,  
     That on the breeze did die ;  
 And loud the Abbess shriek'd in fear,  
 "Saint Withold, save us ! — What is here !  
     Look at yon City Cross !  
 See on its battled tower appear  
 Phantoms, that scutcheous seem to rear,  
     And blazon'd banners toss ! " —

## XXV.

Dun-Edin's Cross, a pillar'd stone,  
 Rose on a turret octagon ;  
 (But now is razed that monument,  
     Whence royal edict rang,  
 And voice of Scotland's law was sent  
     In glorious trumpet-clang.  
 O ! be his tomb as lead to lead,  
 Upon its dull destroyer's head ! —  
 A minstrel's malison is said.) —  
 Then on its battlements they saw  
 A vision, passing Nature's law,  
     Strange, wild, and dimly seen ;  
 Figures that seem to rise and die,  
 Gibber and sign, advance and fly,  
 While nought confirm'd could ear or eye  
     Discern of sound or mien.  
 Yet darkly did it seem, as there  
 Heralds and pursuivants prepare,  
 With trumpet sound, and blazon fair,  
     A summons to proclaim ;  
 But indistinct the pageant proud,  
 As fancy forms of midnight cloud,  
 When flings the moon upon her shroud  
     A wavering tinge of flame ;  
 It flits, expands, and shifts, till loud,  
 From midmost of the spectre crowd,  
     This awful summons came : —

## XXVI.

"Prince, prelate, potentate, and peer,  
     Whose names I now shall call,

Scottish, or foreigner, give ear !  
Subjects of him who sent me here,  
At his tribunal to appear,

I summon one and all :

I cite you by each deadly sin,  
That e'er hath soil'd your hearts within ;  
I cite you by each brutal lust,  
That e'er defiled your earthly dust, —

By wrath, by pride, by fear,  
By each o'er-mastering passion's tone,  
By the dark grave, and dying groan !  
When forty days are pass'd and gone,  
I cite you, at your Monarch's throne,

To answer and appear." —

Then thunder'd forth a roll of names : —

The first was thine, unhappy James !

Then all thy nobles came ;

Crawford, Glencairn, Montrose, Argyle,  
Ross, Bothwell, Forbes, Lennox, Lyle, —  
Why should I tell their separate style ?

Each chief of birth and fame,  
Of Lowland, Highland, Border, Isle,  
Fore-doom'd to Flodden's carnage pile,

Was cited there by name ;

And Marmion, Lord of Fontenaye,  
Of Lutterward, and Scrivelbaye ;  
De Wilton, erst of Aberley,

The self-same thundering voice did say. —

But then another spoke :

"Thy fatal summons I deny,  
And thine infernal Lord defy,  
Appealing me to Him on High,  
Who burst the sinner's yoke."

At that dread accent, with a scream,  
Parted the pageant like a dream,

The summoner was gone.

Prone on her face the Abbess fell,  
And fast, and fast, her beads did tell ;  
Her nuns came, startled by the yell,

And found her there alone.

She mark'd not, at the scene aghast,  
What time, or how, the Palmer pass'd.

## XXVII.

Shift we the scene. — The camp doth move,

Dun-Edin's streets are empty now,  
Save when, for weal of those they love,

To pray the prayer, and vow the vow,  
The tottering child, the anxious fair,  
The gray-haired sire, with pious care,  
To chapels and to shrines repair —

Where is the Palmer now? and where  
The Abbess, Marmion, and Clare? —  
Bold Douglas! to Tantallon fair

They journey in thy charge:

Lord Marmion rode on his right hand,  
The Palmer still was with the band;  
Angus, like Lindesay, did command,

That none should roam at large.

But in that Palmer's alter'd mien  
A wondrous change might now be seen,

Freely he spoke of war,

Of marvels wrought by single hand,  
When lifted for a native land:

And still look'd high, as if he plann'd

Some desperate deed afar.

His courser would he feed and stroke,

And, tucking up his sable frocke,

Would first his mettle bold provoke,

Then soothe or quell his pride.

Old Hubert said, that never one

He saw, except Lord Marmion,

A steed so fairly ride.

## XXVIII.

Some half-hour's march behind, there came,

By Eustace govern'd fair,

A troop escorting Hilda's Dame,

With all her nuns, and Clare.

No audience had Lord Marmion sought;

Ever he fear'd to aggravate

Clara de Clare's suspicious hate;

And safer 'twas, he thought,

To wait till, from the nuns removed,

To curse with candle, bell, and book.  
 Her head the grave Cistercian shook:  
 "The Douglas, and the King," she said,  
 "In their commands will be obey'd:  
 Grieve not, nor dream that harm can fall  
 The maiden in Tantallon hall."

## XXXI.

The Abbess, seeing strife was vain,  
 Assumed her wonted state again, —  
 For much of state she had, —  
 Composed her veil, and raised her head,  
 And — "Bid," in solemn voice she said,  
 "Thy master, bold and bad,  
 The records of his house turn o'er,  
 And, when he shall there written see,  
 That one of his own ancestry  
 Drove the Monks forth of Coventry,  
 Bid him his fate explore!  
 Prancing in pride of earthly trust,  
 His charger hurl'd him to the dust,  
 And, by a base plebeian thrust,  
 He died his band before.  
 God judge 'twixt Marmion and me;  
 He is a Chief of high degree,  
 And I a poor recluse;  
 Yet oft, in holy writ, we see  
 Even such weak minister as me  
 May the oppressor bruise:  
 For thus, inspired, did Judith slay  
 The mighty in his sin,  
 And Jael thus, and Deborah" —  
 Here hasty Blount broke in:  
 "Fitz-Eustace, we must march our band;  
 St. Anton' fire thee! wilt thou stand  
 All day, with bonnet in thy hand,  
 To hear the lady preach?  
 By this good light! if thus we stay,  
 Lord Marmion, for our fond delay,  
 Will sharper sermon teach.  
 Come, d'on thy cap, and mount thy horse;  
 The Dame must patience take perforce." —



## XXXII.

“ Submit we then to force,” said Clare,  
“ But let this barbarous lord despair  
His purposed aim to win ;  
Let him take living, land, and life ;  
But to be Marmion’s wedded wife  
In me were deadly sin :  
And if it be the King’s decree,  
That I must find no sanctuary,  
In that inviolable dome,  
Where even a homicide might come,  
And safely rest his head,  
Though at its open portals stood,  
Thirsting to pour forth blood for blood,  
The kinsmen of the dead ;  
Yet one asylum is my own  
Against the dreaded hour ;  
A low, a silent, and a lone,  
Where kings have little power.  
One victim is before me there. —  
Mother, your blessing, and in prayer  
Remember your unhappy Clare ! ”  
Loud weeps the Abbess, and bestows  
Kind blessings many a one :  
Weeping and wailing loud arose,  
Round patient Clare, the clamorous woes  
Of every simple nun.  
His eyes the gentle Eustace dried,  
And scarce rude Blount the sight could bide.  
Then took the squire her rein,  
And gently led away her steed,  
And, by each courteous word and deed,  
To cheer her strove in vain.

## XXXIII.

But scant three miles the band had rode,  
When o’er a height, they pass’d,  
And, sudden, close before them show’d  
His towers, Tantallon vast ;  
Broad, massive, high, and stretching far,  
And held impregnable in war,  
On a projecting rock they rose,

And round three sides the ocean flows,  
 The fourth did battled walls enclose,  
     And double mound and fosse.  
 By narrow drawbridge, outworks strong,  
 Through studded gates, an entrance long,  
     To the main court they cross.  
 It was a wide and stately square:  
 Around were lodgings, fit and fair,  
     And towers of various form,  
 Which on the court projected far,  
 And broke its lines quadrangular.  
 Here was square keep, there turret high,  
 Or pinnacle that sought the sky,  
 Whence oft the Warder could descry  
     The gathering ocean-storm.

## XXXIV.

Here did they rest. — The princely care  
 Of Douglas, why should I declare,  
 Or say they met reception fair?  
     Or why the tidings say,  
 Which, varying, to Tantallon came,  
 By hurrying post, or fleeter fame,  
     With every varying day?  
 And, first, they heard King James had won  
     Etall, and Wark, and Ford; and then,  
     That Norham Castle strong was ta'en.  
 At that sore marvell'd Marmion; —  
 And Douglas hoped his monarch's hand  
 Would soon subdue Northumberland:  
     But whisper'd news there came,  
 That, while his host inactive lay,  
 And melted by degrees away,  
 King James was dallying off the day  
     With Heron's wily dame. —  
 Such acts to chronicles I yield;  
     Go seek them there and see:  
 Mine is a tale of Flodden Field,  
     And not a history. —  
 At length they heard the Scottish host  
 On that high ridge had made their post,  
     Which frowns o'er Millfield Plain,

And that brave Surrey many a band  
 Had gather'd in the Southern land,  
 And march'd into Northumberland,  
 And camp at Wooler ta'en.  
 Marmion, like charger in the stall,  
 'That hears, without, the trumpet-call,  
 Began to chafe, and swear : —  
 "A sorry thing to hide my head  
 In castle, like a fearful maid,  
 When such a field is near !  
 Needs must I see this battle-day :  
 Death to my fame if such a fray  
 Were fought, and Marmion away !  
 The Douglas, too, I wot not why,  
 Hath 'bated of his courtesy :  
 No longer in his halls I'll stay."  
 Then bade his band they should array  
 For march against the dawning day.

## INTRODUCTION TO CANTO SIXTH.

TO RICHARD HEBER, ESQ.

*Mertoun-House, Christmas.*

HEAP on more wood ! — the wind is chill ;  
 But let it whistle as it will,  
 We'll keep our Christmas merry still.  
 Each age has deem'd the new-born year  
 The fittest time for festal cheer :  
 Even, heathen yet, the savage Dane  
 At Iol more deep the mead did drain ;  
 High on the beach his galleys drew,  
 And feasted all his pirate crew ;  
 Then in his low and pine-built hall,  
 Where shields and axes deck'd the wall,  
 They gorged upon the half-dress'd steer ;  
 Caroused in seas of sable beer ;  
 While round, in brutal jest, were thrown  
 The half-gnaw'd rib, and marrow-bone,  
 Or listen'd all in grim delight,

While scalds yell'd out the joys of fight.  
Then forth, in frenzy, would they hie,  
While wildly-loose their red locks fly,  
And dancing round the blazing pile,  
They make such barbarous mirth the while,  
As best might to the mind recall  
The boisterous joys of Odin's hall.

And well our Christian sires of old  
Loved when the year its course had roll'd,  
And brought blithe Christmas back again,  
With all his hospitable train.  
Domestic and religious rite  
Gave honor to the holy night ;  
On Christmas Eve the bells were rung ;  
On Christmas Eve the mass was sung :  
That only night in all the year,  
Saw the stoled priest the chalice rear.  
The damsel donn'd her kirtle sheen ;  
The hall was dress'd with holly green ;  
Forth to the wood did merry-men go,  
To gather in the mistletoe.  
Then open'd wide the baron's hall  
To vassal, tenant, serf, and all ;  
Power laid his rod of rule aside,  
And Ceremony doff'd his pride.  
The heir, with roses in his shoes,  
That night might village partner choose ;  
The Lord, underogating, share  
The vulgar game of " post and pair."  
All hail'd, with uncontroll'd delight,  
And general voice, the happy night,  
That to the cottage, as the crown,  
Brought tidings of salvation down.

The fire, with well-dried logs supplied,  
Went roaring up the chimney wide ;  
The huge hall-table's oaken face,  
Scrubb'd till it shone, the day to grace,  
Bore then upon its massive board  
No mark to part the squire and lord.  
Then was brought in the lusty brawn,  
By old blue-coated serving man ;

Then the grim boar's-head frown'd on high,  
 Crested with bays and rosemary,  
 Well can the green-garb'd ranger tell,  
 How, when, and where, the monster fell ;  
 What dogs before his death he tore,  
 And all the baiting of the boar.  
 The wassel round, in good brown bowls,  
 Garnish'd with ribbons, blithely trowls.  
 There the huge sirloin reek'd ; hard by  
 Plum-porridge stood, and Christmas pie ;  
 Nor fail'd old Scotland to produce,  
 At such high tide, her savory goose.  
 Then came the merry maskers in,  
 And carols roar'd with blithesome din ;  
 If unmelodious was the song,  
 It was a hearty note, and strong.  
 Who lists may in their mumming see  
 Traces of ancient mystery ;  
 White shirts supplied the masquerade,  
 And smutt'd cheeks the visors made ;  
 But, O ! what maskers, richly dight,  
 Can boast of bosoms half so light !  
 England was merry England, when  
 Old Christmas brought his sports again.  
 'Twas Christmas broach'd the mightiest ale :  
 'Twas Christmas told the merriest tale ;  
 A Christmas gambol oft could cheer  
 The poor man's heart through half the year.  
 Still linger, in our northern clime,  
 Some remnants of the good old time ;  
 And still, within our valleys here,  
 We hold the kindred title dear,  
 Even when, perchance, its far-fetch'd claim  
 To Southron's ear sounds empty name ;  
 For course of blood, our proverbs deem,  
 Is warmer than the mountain-stream.  
 And thus, my Christmas still I hold  
 Where my great-grandsire came of old,  
 With amber beard and flaxen hair,  
 And reverend apostolic air —  
 The feast and holy-tide to share,  
 And mix sobriety with wine,  
 And honest mirth with thoughts divine :

Small thought was his, in after time  
E'er to be hitch'd into a rhyme.  
The simple sire could only boast,  
That he was loyal to his cost;  
The banish'd race of kings revered,  
And lost his land, — but kept his beard.

In these dear halls, where welcome kind  
Is with fair liberty combined;  
Where cordial friendship gives the hand,  
And flies constraint the magic wand  
Of the fair dame that rules the land,  
Little we heed the tempest drear,  
While music, mirth, and social cheer,  
Speed on their wings the passing year.  
And Mertoun's halls are fair e'en now,  
When not a leaf is on the bough.  
Tweed loves them well, and turns again,  
As loath to leave the sweet domain,  
And holds his mirror to her face,  
And clips her with a close embrace: —  
Gladly as he, we seek the dome,  
And as reluctant turn us home.

How just that, at this time of glee,  
My thoughts should, Heber, turn to thee!  
For many a merry hour we've known,  
And heard the chimes of midnight's tone.  
Cease, then, my friend! a moment cease,  
And leave these classic tomes in peace!  
Of Roman and of Grecian lore,  
Sure mortal brain can hold no more.  
These ancients, as Noll Bluff might say,  
“Were pretty fellows in their day;”  
But time and tide o'er all prevail —  
On Christmas eve a Christmas tale —  
Of wonder and of war — “Profane!  
What! leave the lofty Latian strain,  
Her stately prose, her verse's charms,  
To hear the clash of rusty arms:  
In Fairy Land or Limbo lost,  
To jostle conjuror and ghost,

Goblin and witch ! ” — Nay, Heber dear,  
 Before you touch my charter, hear ;  
 Though Leyden aids, alas ! no more,  
 My cause with many-linguaged lore,  
 This may I say : — in realms of death  
 Ulysses meets Alcides’ *wraith* ;  
 Æneas, upon Thracia’s shore,  
 The ghost of murder’d Polydore ;  
 For omens, we in Livy cross,  
 At every turn, *locutus Bos*.  
 As grave and duly speaks that ox,  
 As if he told the price of stocks ;  
 Or held, in Rome republican,  
 The place of Common-councilman.

All nations have their omens drear,  
 Their legends wild of woe and fear.  
 To Cambria look — the peasant see,  
 Bethink him of Glendowerdy,  
 And shun “the spirit’s Blasted Tree.”  
 The Highlander, whose red claymore  
 The battle turn’d on Maida’s shore,  
 Will, on a Friday morn, look pale,  
 If ask’d to tell a fairy tale :  
 He fears the vengeful Elfin King,  
 Who leaves that day his grassy ring :  
 Invisible to human ken,  
 He walks among the sons of men.

Did’st e’er, dear Heber, pass along  
 Beneath the towers of Franchémont,  
 Which, like an eagle’s nest in air,  
 Hang o’er the stream and hamlet fair ?  
 Deep in their vaults, the peasants say,  
 A mighty treasure buried lay,  
 Amass’d through rapine and through wrong  
 By the last Lord of Franchémont:  
 The iron chest is bolted hard,  
 A huntsman sits, its constant guard ;  
 Around his neck his horn is hung,  
 His hanger in his belt is slung ;  
 Before his feet his blood-hounds lie :  
 An ’twere not for his gloomy eye,



Whose withering glance no heart can brook,  
As true a huntsman doth he look,  
As bugle e'er in brake did sound,  
Or ever hollow'd to a hound.  
To chase the fiend, and win the prize,  
In that same dungeon ever tries  
An aged Necromantic Priest ;  
It is an hundred years at least,  
Since 'twixt them first the strife begun,  
And neither yet has lost nor won.  
And oft the Conjuror's words will make,  
The stubborn Demon groan and quake ;  
And oft the bands of iron break,  
Or bursts one lock, and still amain,  
Fast as 'tis open'd, shuts again.  
That magic strife within the tomb  
May last until the day of doom,  
Unless the Adept shall learn to tell  
The very word that clench'd the spell,  
When Franch'mont lock'd the treasure cell.  
An hundred years are pass'd and gone,  
And scarce three letters has he won.

Such general superstition may  
Excuse for old Pitscottie say ;  
Whose gossip history has given  
My song the messenger from Heaven,  
That warn'd, in Lithgow, Scotland's King,  
Nor less the infernal summoning ;  
May pass the Monk of Durham's tale,  
Whose Demon fought in Gothic mail ;  
May pardon plead for Fordun grave,  
Who told of Gifford's Goblin-Cave.  
But why such instances to you,  
Who, in an instant, can renew  
Your treasured hordes of various lore,  
And furnish twenty thousand more ?  
Hoards, not like theirs whose volumes rest  
Like treasures in the Franch'mont chest,  
While gripple owners still refuse  
To others what they cannot use ;  
Give them the priest's whole century,  
They shall not spell you letters three ;

Their pleasure in the books the same  
 The magpie takes in pilfer'd gem.  
 Thy volumes, open as thy heart,  
 Delight, amusement, science, art,  
 To every ear and eye impart;  
 Yet who, of all who thus employ them,  
 Can like the owner's self enjoy them?  
 But, hark! I hear the distant drum!  
 The day of Flodden Field is come. —  
 Adieu, dear Heber! life and health,  
 And store of literary wealth!

## CANTO SIXTH.

## THE BATTLE.

## I.

WHILE great events were on the gale,  
 And each hour brought a varying tale,  
 And the demeanor, changed and cold,  
 Of Douglas, fretted Marmion bold,  
 And, like the impatient steed of war,  
 He snuff'd the battle from afar;  
 And hopes were none, that back again  
 Herald should come from Terouenne,  
 Where England's King in leaguer lay,  
 Before decisive battle-day;  
 Whilst these things were, the mournful Clare  
 Did in the Dame's devotions share:  
 For the good Countess ceaseless pray'd  
 To Heaven and Saints, her sons to aid,  
 And, with short interval, did pass  
 From prayer to book, from book to mass,  
 And all in high Baronial pride, —  
 A life both dull and dignified; —  
 Yet as Lord Marmion nothing press'd  
 Upon her intervals of rest,  
 Dejected Clara well could bear  
 The formal state, the lengthen'd prayer,  
 Though dearest to her wounded heart  
 The hours that she might spend apart.

## II.

I said, Tantallon's dizzy steep  
Hung o'er the margin of the deep.  
Many a rude tower and rampart there  
Repell'd the insult of the air;  
Which, when the tempest vex'd the sky,  
Half breeze, half spray, came whistling by.  
Above the rest, a turret square  
Did o'er its Gothic entrance bear,  
Of sculpture rude, a stony shield;  
The Bloody Heart was in the Field,  
And in the chief three mullets stood,  
The cognizance of Douglas blood.  
The turret held a narrow stair,  
Which, mounted, gave you access where  
A parapet's embattled row  
Did seaward round the castle go.  
Sometimes in dizzy steps descending,  
Sometimes in narrow circuit bending,  
Sometimes in platform broad extending,  
Its varying circle did combine  
Bulwark, and bartisan, and line,  
And bastion, tower, and vantage-coign:  
Above the booming ocean leant  
The far projecting battlement;  
The billows burst, in ceaseless flow,  
Upon the precipice below.  
Where'er Tantallon faced the land,  
Gate-works, and walls, were strongly mann'd;  
No need upon the sea-girt side;  
The steepy rock, and frantic tide,  
Approach of human step denied;  
And thus these lines, and ramparts rude,  
Were left in deepest solitude.

## III.

And, for they were so lonely, Clare  
Would to these battlements repair,  
And muse upon her sorrows there,  
And list the sea-bird's cry;  
Or slow, like noontide ghost, would glide  
Along the dark gray bulwarks' side,

And ever on the heaving tide  
Look down with weary eye.  
Oft did the cliff, and swelling main,  
Recall the thoughts of Whitby's fane, —  
A home she ne'er might see again ;  
For she had laid adown,  
So Douglas bade, the hood and veil,  
And frontlet of the cloister pale,  
And Benedictine gown :  
It were unseemly sight, he said,  
A novice out of convent shade. —  
Now her bright locks, with sunny glow,  
Again adorn'd her brow of snow ;  
Her mantle rich, whose borders, round,  
A deep and fretted broiderie bound,  
In golden foldings sought the ground ;  
Of holy ornament, alone  
Remain'd a cross with ruby stone ;  
And often did she look  
On that which in her hand she bore,  
With velvet bound, and broider'd o'er,  
Her breviary book.  
In such a place, so lone, so grim,  
At dawning pale, or twilight dim,  
It fearful would have been  
To meet a form so richly dress'd,  
With book in hand, and cross on breast,  
And such a woeful mien.  
Fitz-Eustace, loitering with his bow,  
To practise on the gull and crow,  
Saw her, at distance, gliding slow,  
And did by Mary swear, —  
Some love-lorn Fay she might have been,  
Or, in Romance, some spell-bound Queen ;  
For ne'er, in work-day world, was seen  
A form so witching fair.

## IV.

Once walking thus, at evening tide,  
It chanced a gliding sail she spied,  
And, sighing, thought — “ The Abbess, there,  
Perchance, does, to her home repair ;

Her peaceful rule, where Duty, free,  
 Walks hand in hand with Charity;  
 Where oft Devotion's tranced glow  
 Can such a glimpse of heaven bestow,  
 That the enraptured sisters see  
 High vision, and deep mystery;  
 The very form of Hilda fair,  
 Hovering upon the sunny air,  
 And smiling on her votaries' prayer.  
 O! wherefore, to my duller eye,  
 Did still the Saint her form deny!  
 Was it, that, sear'd by sinful scorn,  
 My heart could neither melt nor burn?  
 Or lie my warm affections low,  
 With him, that taught them first to glow?  
 Yet, gentle Abbess, well I knew,  
 To pay thy kindness grateful due,  
 And well could brook the mild command,  
 That ruled thy simple maiden band.  
 How different now! condemn'd to bide  
 My doom from this dark tyrant's pride. —  
 But Marmion has to learn, ere long,  
 That constant mind, and hate of wrong,  
 Descended to a feeble girl,  
 From Red De Clare, stout Gloster's Earl:  
 Of such a stem, a sapling weak,  
 He ne'er shall bend, although he break.

## V.

"But see! — what makes this armor here?" —  
 For in her path there lay  
 Targe, corslet, helm; — she view'd them near. —  
 "The breast-plate pierced! — Ay, much I fear,  
 Weak fence wert thou 'gainst foeman's spear,  
 That hath made fatal entrance here,  
 As these dark blood-gouts say. —  
 Thus Wilton! Oh! not corslet's ward,  
 Not truth, as diamond pure and hard,  
 Could be thy manly bosom's guard,  
 On yon disastrous day!"  
 She raised her eyes in mournful mood, —  
 WILTON himself before her stood!

It might have seem'd his passing ghost,  
 For every youthful grace was lost;  
 And joy unwonted, and surprise,  
 Gave their strange wildness to his eyes. —  
 Expect not, noble dames and lords,  
 That I can tell such scene in words:  
 What skilful limner e'er would choose  
 To paint the rainbow's varying hues,  
 Unless to mortal it were given  
 To dip his brush in dyes of heaven?  
 Far less can my weak line declare

Each changing passion's shade;  
 Brightening to rapture from despair,  
 Sorrow, surprise, and pity there,  
 And joy, with her angelic air,  
 And hope, that paints the future fair,

Their varying hues display'd:  
 Each o'er its rival's ground extending,  
 Alternate conquering, shifting, blending,  
 Till all, fatigued, the conflict yield,  
 And mighty Love retains the field.  
 Shortly I tell what then he said,  
 By many a tender word delay'd,  
 And modest blush, and bursting sigh,  
 And question kind, and fond reply: —

## VI.

## DE WILTON'S HISTORY.

"Forget we that disastrous day,  
 When senseless in the lists I lay.  
 Thence dragg'd, — but how I cannot know,  
 For sense and recollection fled, —  
 I found me on a pallet low,  
 Within my ancient beadsman's shed.  
 Austin, — Remember'st thou, my Clare,  
 How thou didst blush, when the old man,  
 When first our infant love began,  
 Said we would make a matchless pair? —  
 Menials, and friends, and kinsmen fled  
 From the degraded traitor's bed, —  
 He only held my burning head,  
 And tended me for many a day,

While wounds and fever held their sway.  
 But far more needful was his care,  
 When sense return'd to wake despair;  
     For I did tear the closing wound,  
     And dash me frantic on the ground,  
 If e'er I heard the name of Clare.  
 At length, to calmer reason brought,  
 Much by his kind attendance wrought,  
     With him I left my native strand,  
 And, in a Palmer's weeds array'd,  
 My hated name and form to shade,  
     I journey'd many a land;  
 No more a lord of rank and birth,  
 But mingled with the dregs of earth.  
 Oft Austin for my reason fear'd,  
 When I would sit, and deeply brood  
 On dark revenge, and deeds of blood,  
     Or wild mad schemes uprear'd.  
 My friend at length fell sick, and said,  
     God would remove him soon:  
 And, while upon his dying bed,  
     He begg'd of me a boon —  
 If e'er my deadliest enemy  
 Beneath my brand should conquer'd lie,  
 Even then my mercy should awake,  
 And spare his life for Austin's sake.

## VII.

" Still restless as a second Cain,  
 To Scotland next my route was ta'en,  
     Full well the paths I knew.  
 Fame of my fate made various sound,  
 That death in pilgrimage I found,  
 That I had perish'd of my wound, —  
     None cared which tale was true:  
 And living eye could never guess  
 De Wilton in his Palmer's dress;  
 For now that sable slough is shed,  
 And trimm'd my shaggy beard and head,  
 I scarcely know me in the glass.  
 A chance most wondrous did provide,  
 That I should be that Baron's guide —  
     I will not name his name! —



Vengeance to God alone belongs ;  
 But, when I think on all my wrongs,  
     My blood is liquid flame !  
 And ne'er the time shall I forget,  
 When, in a Scottish hostel set,  
     Dark looks we did exchange :  
 What were his thoughts I cannot tell ;  
 But in my bosom muster'd Hell  
     Its plans of dark revenge.

## VIII.

“ A word of vulgar augury,  
 That broke from me, I scarce knew why,  
     Brought on a village tale ;  
 Which wrought upon his moody sprite,  
 And sent him armed forth by night. .  
     I borrow'd steed and mail,  
 And weapons, from his sleeping band ;  
     And, passing from a postern door,  
 We met, and, counter'd hand to hand, —  
     He fell on Gifford moor.  
 For the death-stroke my brand I drew  
 (O then my helmed head he knew,  
     The Palmer's cowl was gone,)  
 Then had three inches of my blade  
 The heavy debt of vengeance paid, —  
 My hand the thought of Austin staid ;  
     I left him there alone. —  
 O good old man ! even from the grave,  
 Thy spirit could thy master save :  
 If I had slain my foeman, ne'er  
 Had Whitby's Abbess, in her fear,  
 Given to my hand this packet dear,  
 Of power to clear my injured fame,  
 And vindicate De Wilton's name. —  
 Perchance you heard the Abbess tell  
 Of the strange pageantry of Hell,  
     That broke our secret speech —  
 It rose from the infernal shade,  
 Or featly was some juggle play'd,  
     A tale of peace to teach.  
 Appeal to Heaven I judged was best,  
 When my name came among the rest.

## IX.

"Now here, within Tantallon Hold,  
 To Douglas late my tale I told,  
 To whom my house was known of old.  
 Won by my proofs, his falchion bright  
 This eve anew shall dub me knight.  
 These were the arms that once did turn  
 The tide of fight on Otterburne,  
 And Harry Hotspur forced to yield,  
 When the dead Douglas won the field.  
 These Angus gave — his armorer's care,  
 Ere morn, shall every breach repair;  
 For nought, he said, was in his halls,  
 But ancient armor on the walls,  
 And aged chargers in the stalls,  
 And women, priests, and grey-hair'd men;  
 The rest were all in Twisel glen.  
 And now I watch my armor here,  
 By law of arms, till midnight's near;  
 Then, once again a belted knight,  
 Seek Surrey's camp with dawn of light.

## X.

"There soon again we meet, my Clare!  
 This Baron means to guide thee there:  
 Douglas reveres his King's command,  
 Else would he take thee from his band.  
 And there thy kinsman, Surrey, too,  
 Will give De Wilton justice due.  
 Now meeter far for martial broil,  
 Firmer my limbs, and strung by toil,  
 Once more" — "O Wilton! must we then  
 Risk new-found happiness again,  
 Trust fate of arms once more?  
 And is there not an humble glen,  
 Where we, content and poor,  
 Might build a cottage in the shade,  
 A shepherd thou, and I to aid  
 Thy task on dale and moor? —  
 That reddening brow! — too well I know,  
 Not even thy Clare can peace bestow,  
 While falsehood stains thy name:

Go then to fight ! Clare bids thee go !  
Clare can a warrior's feelings know,  
And weep a warrior's shame ;  
Can Red Earl Gilbert's spirit feel,  
Buckle the spurs upon thy heel,  
And belt thee with thy brand of steel,  
And send thee forth to fame !”

## XI.

That night, upon the rocks and bay,  
The midnight moonbeam slumbering lay,  
And pour'd its silver light, and pure,  
Through loop-hole, and through embrasure,  
Upon Tantallon tower and hall ;  
But chief where arched windows wide  
Illuminate the chapel's pride,  
The sober glances fall.  
Much was there need ; though seam'd with scars,  
Two veterans of the Douglas' wars,  
Though two gray priests were there,  
And each a blazing torch held high,  
You could not by their blaze descry  
The chapel's carving fair.  
Amid that dim and smoky light,  
Chequering the silvery moonshine bright,  
A bishop by the altar stood,  
A noble lord of Douglas blood,  
With mitre sheen, and rocquet white.  
Yet show'd his meek and thoughtful eye  
But little pride of prelacy ;  
More pleased that, in a barbarous age,  
He gave rude Scotland Virgil's page,  
Than that beneath his rule he held  
The bishopric of fair Dunkeld.  
Beside him ancient Angus stood,  
Doff'd his furr'd gown and sable hood :  
O'er his huge form and visage pale,  
He wore a cap and shirt of mail ;  
And lean'd his large and wrinkled hand  
Upon the huge and sweeping brand  
Which wont of yore, in battle fray,  
His foeman's limbs to shred away,  
As wood-knife lops the sapling spray.

He seem'd as, from the tombs around  
 Rising at judgment-day,  
 Some giant Douglas may be found  
 In all his old array ;  
 So pale his face, so huge his limb,  
 So old his arms, his look so grim.

## XII.

Then at the altar Wilton kneels,  
 And Clare the spurs bound on his heels ;  
 And think what next he must have felt,  
 At buckling of the falchion belt !  
 And judge how Clara changed her hue,  
 While fastening to her lover's side  
 A friend, which, though in danger tried,  
 He once had found untrue !  
 Then Douglas struck him with his blade :  
 " Saint Michael and Saint Andrew aid,  
 I dub thee knight.  
 Arise Sir Ralph, De Wilton's heir !  
 For King, for Church, for Lady fair,  
 See that thou fight." —  
 And Bishop Gawain, as he rose,  
 Said — " Wilton ! grieve not for thy woes,  
 Disgrace, and trouble ;  
 For He, who honor best bestows,  
 May give thee double." —  
 De Wilton sobb'd, for sob he must —  
 " Where'er I meet a Douglas, trust  
 That Douglas is my brother ! " —  
 " Nay, nay," old Angus said, " not so ;  
 To Surrey's camp thou now must go,  
 Thy wrongs no-longer smother.  
 I have two sons in yonder field ;  
 And, if thou meet'st them under shield,  
 Upon them bravely — do thy worst ;  
 And foul fall him that blenches first ! "

## XIII.

Not far advanced was morning day,  
 When Marmion did his troop array  
 To Surrey's camp to ride ;  
 He had safe conduct for his band,

Beneath the Royal seal and hand,  
 And Douglas gave a guide :  
 The ancient Earl, with stately grace,  
 Would Clara on her palfrey place,  
 And whisper'd in an under tone,  
 " Let the hawk stoop, his prey is flown."  
 The train from out the castle drew,  
 But Marmion stopp'd to bid adieu : —  
 " Though something I might plain," he said,  
 " Of cold respect to stranger guest,  
 Sent hither by your King's behest,  
 While in Tantallon's towers I staid ;  
 Part we in friendship from your land,  
 And, noble Earl, receive my hand." —  
 But Douglas round him drew his cloak,  
 Folded his arms, and thus he spoke :  
 " My manors, halls, and bowers, shall still  
 Be open, at my Sovereign's will,  
 To each one whom he lists, howe'er  
 Unmeet to be the owner's peer.  
 My castles are my King's alone,  
 From turret to foundation-stone —  
 The hand of Douglas is his own ;  
 And never shall in friendly grasp  
 The hand of such as Marmion clasp." —

## XIV.

Burn'd Marmion's swarthy cheek like fire,  
 And shook his very frame for ire,  
 And — " This to me ! " he said, —  
 " An 'twere not for thy hoary beard,  
 Such hand as Marmion's had not spared  
 To cleave the Douglas' head !  
 And, first, I tell thee, haughty Peer,  
 He, who does England's message here,  
 Although the meanest in her state,  
 May well, proud Angus, be thy mate :  
 And, Douglas, more I tell thee here,  
 Even in thy pitch of pride,  
 Here in thy hold, thy vassals near,  
 (Nay, never look upon your lord,  
 And lay your hands upon your sword,)  
 I tell thee, thou'rt defied !

And if thou said'st, I am not peer  
To any lord in Scotland here,  
Lowland or Highland, far or near,  
Lord Angus, thou hast lied ! " —  
On the Earl's cheek the flush of rage  
O'ercame the ashen hue of age :  
Fierce he broke forth, — " And darest thou then  
To beard the lion in his den,  
The Douglas in his hall ?  
And hopest thou hence unscathed to go ? —  
No, by Saint Bride of Bothwell, no !  
Up drawbridge, grooms — what, Warder, ho !  
Let the portcullis fall. " —  
Lord Marmion turn'd, — well was his need,  
And dash'd the rowels in his steed,  
Like arrow through the archway sprung,  
The ponderous grate behind him rung :  
To pass there was such scanty room,  
The bars, descending, razed his plume.

## XV.

The steed along the drawbridge flies,  
Just as it trembled on the rise ;  
Nor lighter does the swallow skim  
Along the smooth lake's level brim :  
And when Lord Marmion reach'd his band,  
He halts, and turns with clenched hand,  
And shout of loud defiance pours,  
And shook his gauntlet at the towers.  
" Horse ! horse ! " the Douglas cried, " and chase ! "  
But soon he rein'd his fury's pace :  
" A royal messenger he came,  
Though most unworthy of the name. —  
A letter forged ! Saint Jude to speed !  
Did ever knight so foul a deed !  
At first in heart it liked me ill,  
When the King praised his clerkly skill.  
Thanks to Saint Bothan, son of mine,  
Save Gawain, ne'er could pen a line :  
So swore I, and I swear it still,  
Let my boy-bishop fret his fill. —  
Saint Mary mend my fiery mood !

Old age ne'er cools the Douglas blood,  
I thought to slay him where he stood.  
'Tis pity of him too," he cried :  
" Bold can he speak, and fairly ride,  
I warrant him a warrior tried."  
With this his mandate he recalls,  
And slowly seeks his castle halls.

## XVI.

The day in Marmion's journey wore ;  
Yet, ere his passion's gust was o'er,  
They cross'd the heights of Stanrigmoor.  
His troop more closely there he scann'd,  
And miss'd the Palmer from the band. —  
" Palmer or not," young Blount did say,  
" He parted at the peep of day ;  
Good sooth, it was in strange array." —  
" In what array ? " said Marmion, quick.  
" My Lord, I ill can spell the trick ;  
But all night long, with clink and bang,  
Close to my couch did hammers clang ;  
At dawn the falling drawbridge rang,  
And from a loop-hole while I peep,  
Old Bell-the-Cat came from the Keep,  
Wrapp'd in a gown of sables fair,  
As fearful of the morning air ;  
Beneath, when that was blown aside,  
A rusty shirt of mail I spied,  
By Archibald won in bloody work,  
Against the Saracen and Turk :  
Last night it hung not in the hall ;  
I thought some marvel would befall.  
And next I saw them saddled lead  
Old Cheviot forth, the Earl's best steed ;  
A matchless horse, though something old,  
Prompt in his paces, cool and bold.  
I heard the sheriff Sholto say,  
The Earl did much the Master pray  
To use him on the battle-day ;  
But he preferr'd " — " Nay, Henry, cease !  
Thou sworn horse-courser, hold thy peace. —  
Eustace, thou bear'st a brain — I pray  
What did Blount see at break of day ? " —



## XVII.

"In brief, my lord, we both descried  
 (For then I stood by Henry's side)  
 The Palmer mount, and outwards ride,  
 Upon the Earl's own favorite steed ;  
 All sheathed he was in armor bright,  
 And much resembled that same knight,  
 Subdued by you in Cotswold fight :

Lord Angus wish'd him speed." —  
 The instant that Fitz-Eustace spoke,  
 A sudden light on Marmion broke ; —  
 "Ah? dastard fool, to reason lost !"  
 He mutter'd ; "'Twas nor fay nor ghost  
 I met upon the moonlight wold,  
 But living man of earthly mould. —

O dotage blind and gross !  
 Had I but fought as wont, one thrust  
 Had laid De Wilton in the dust,

My path no more to cross. —  
 How stand we now ? — he told his tale  
 To Douglas ; and with some avail ;

'Twas therefore gloom'd his rugged brow. —  
 Will Surrey dare to entertain,  
 'Gainst Marmion, charge disproved and vain ?

Small risk of that, I trow.  
 Yet Clare's sharp questions must I shun ;  
 Must separate Constance from the Nun —  
 O, what a tangled web we weave,  
 When first we practise to deceive !  
 A Palmer too ! — no wonder why  
 I felt rebuked beneath his eye :  
 I might have known there was but one  
 Whose look could quell Lord Marmion."

## XVIII.

Stung with these thoughts, he urged to speed  
 His troop, and reach'd, at eve, the Tweed,  
 Where Lennel's convent closed their march ;  
 (There now is left but one frail arch,  
 Yet mourn thou not its cells ;  
 Our time a fair exchange has made ;  
 Hard by, in hospitable shade,  
 A reverend pilgrim dwells,

Well worth the whole Bernardine brood,  
 That e'er wore sandal, frock, or hood.)  
 Yet did Saint Bernard's Abbot there  
 Give Marmion entertainment fair,  
 And lodging for his train and Clare.  
 Next morn the Baron climb'd the tower,  
 To view afar the Scottish power,  
   Encamp'd on Flodden edge :  
 The white pavilions made a show,  
 Like remnants of the winter snow,  
   Along the dusky ridge.  
 Long Marmion look'd : — at length his eye  
 Unusual movement might descry  
   Amid the shifting lines :  
 The Scottish host drawn out appears,  
 For, flashing on the hedge of spears  
   The eastern sunbeam shines.  
 Their front now deepening, now extending ;  
 Their flank inclining, wheeling, bending,  
 Now drawing back, and now descending, .  
 The skilful Marmion well could know,  
 They watch'd the motions of some foe,  
 Who traversed on the plain below.

## XIX.

Even so it was. From Flodden ridge  
 The Scots beheld the English host  
   Leave Barmore-wood, their evening post,  
   And heedful watch'd them as they cross'd  
 The Till by Twisel Bridge.  
   High sight it is, and haughty, while  
   They dive into the deep defile ;  
   Beneath the cavern'd cliff they fall,  
   Beneath the castle's airy wall.  
 By rock, by oak, by hawthorn-tree,  
   Troop after troop are disappearing ;  
   Troop after troop their banners rearing,  
 Upon the eastern bank you see.  
 Still pouring down the rocky den,  
   Where flows the sullen Till,  
 And rising from the dim-wood glen,  
 Standards on standards, men on men,  
   In slow succession still,

And, sweeping o'er the Gothic arch,  
 And pressing on, in ceaseless march,  
     To gain the opposing hill.  
 That morn, to many a trumpet clang,  
 Twisel! thy rock's deep echo rang;  
 And many a chief of birth and rank,  
 Saint Helen! at thy fountain drank.  
 Thy hawthorn glade, which now we see  
 In spring-time bloom so lavishly,  
 Had then from many an axe its doom,  
 To give the marching columns room.

## XX.

And why stands Scotland idly now,  
 Dark Flodden! on thy airy brow,  
 Since England gains the pass the while,  
 And struggles through the deep defile?  
 What checks the fiery soul of James?  
 Why sits that champion of the dames  
     Inactive on his steed,  
 And sees, between him and his land,  
 Between him and Tweed's southern strand,  
     His host Lord Surrey lead?  
 What 'vails the vain knight-errant's brand? —  
 O, Douglas, for thy leading wand!  
     Fierce Randolph, for thy speed!  
 O for one hour of Wallace wight,  
 Or well-skill'd Bruce, to rule the fight,  
 And cry — "Saint Andrew and our right!"  
 Another sight had seen that morn,  
 From Fate's dark book a leaf been torn,  
 And Flodden had been Bannockbourne! —  
 The precious hour has pass'd in vain,  
 And England's host has gain'd the plain;  
 Wheeling their march, and circling still,  
 Around the base of Flodden hill.

## XXI.

Ere yet the bands met Marmion's eye,  
 Fitz-Eustace shouted loud and high,  
 "Hark! hark! my lord, an English drum!  
 And see ascending squadrons come  
     Between Tweed's river and the hill,

Foot, horse, and cannon : — hap what hap,  
My basnet to a prentice cap,

Lord Surrey's o'er the Till! —

Yet more ! yet more ! — how far array'd

They file from out the hawthorn shade,

And sweep so gallant by !

• With all their banners bravely spread,

And all their armor flashing high,

Saint George might waken from the dead,

To see fair England's standards fly." —

"Stint in thy prate," quoth Blount, "thou'dst best,

And listen to our lord's behest." —

With kindling brow Lord Marmion said, —

"This instant be our band array'd ;

The river must be quickly cross'd,

That we may join Lord Surrey's host.

If fight King James, — as well I trust

That fight he will, and fight he must,

The Lady Clare behind our lines,

Shall tarry while the battle joins."

## XXII.

Himself he swift on-horseback threw,

Scarce to the Abbot bade adieu ;

Far less would listen to his prayer,

To leave behind the helpless Clare.

Down to the Tweed his band he drew,

And mutter'd, as the flood they view,

"The pheasant in the falcon's claw,

He scarce will yield to please a daw :

Lord Angus may the Abbot awe,

So Clare shall bide with me."

Then on that dangerous ford, and deep,

Where to the Tweed Leat's eddies creep,

He ventured desperately :

And not a moment will he bide,

Till squire, or groom, before him ride ;

Headmost of all he stems the tide,

And stems it gallantly.

Eustace held Clare upon her horse,

Old Hubert led her rein,

Stoutly they braved the current's course,

And, though far downward driven per force,  
 The southern bank they gain;  
 Behind them straggling, came to shore,  
 As best they might, the train:  
 Each o'er his head his yew-bow bore,  
 A caution not in vain;  
 Deep need that day that every string,  
 By wet unharm'd, should sharply ring.  
 A moment then Lord Marmion staid,  
 And breathed his steed, his men array'd,  
 Then forward moved his band,  
 Until, Lord Surrey's rear-guard won,  
 He halted by a Cross of Stone,  
 That, on a hillock standing lone,  
 Did all the field command.

## XXIII.

Hence might they see the full array  
 Of either host, for deadly fray;  
 Their marshall'd lines stretch'd east and west,  
 And fronted north and south,  
 And distant salutation pass'd  
 From the loud cannon mouth;  
 Not in the close successive rattle,  
 That breathes the voice of modern battle,  
 But slow and far between. —  
 The hillock gain'd, Lord Marmion staid:  
 "Here, by this Cross," he gently said,  
 "You well may view the scene.  
 Here shalt thou tarry, lovely Clare:  
 O! think of Marmion in thy prayer! —  
 Thou wilt not? — well, — no less my care  
 Shall, watchful, for thy weal prepare. —  
 You, Blount and Eustace, are her guard,  
 With ten pick'd archers of my train;  
 With England if the day go hard,  
 To Berwick speed amain. —  
 But if we conquer, cruel maid,  
 My spoils shall at your feet be laid,  
 When here we meet again."  
 He waited not for answer there,  
 And would not mark the maid's despair,  
 Nor heed the discontented look

From either squire ; but spurr'd amain,  
And, dashing through the battle plain,  
His way to Surrey took.

## XXIV.

“ — The good Lord Marmion, by my life !  
Welcome to danger's hour ! —  
Short greeting serves in time of strife : —  
Thus have I ranged my power :  
Myself will rule this central host,  
Stout Stanley fronts their right,  
My sons command the vaward post,  
With Brian Tunstall, stainless knight ;  
Lord Dacre, with his horsemen light,  
Shall be in rearward of the fight,  
And succor those that need it most.  
Now, gallant Marmion, well I know,  
Would gladly to the vanguard go ;  
Edmund, the admiral, Tunstall there,  
With thee their charge will blithely share ;  
There fight thine own retainers too,  
Beneath De Burg, thy steward true.” —  
“ Thanks, noble Surrey ! ” Marmion said,  
Nor farther greeting there he paid ;  
But, parting like a thunderbolt,  
First in the vanguard made a halt,  
Where such a shout there rose  
Of “ Marmion ! Marmion ! ” that the cry  
Up Flodden Mountain shrilling high,  
Startled the Scottish foes.

## XXV.

Blount and Fitz-Eustace rested still  
With Lady Clare upon the hill ;  
On which, (for far the day was spent,)  
The western sunbeams now were bent.  
The cry they heard, its meaning knew,  
Could plain their distant comrades view :  
Sadly to Blount did Eustace say,  
“ Unworthy office here to stay !  
No hope of gilded spurs to-day. —  
But see ! look up — on Flodden bent  
The Scottish foe has fired his tent.”  
And sudden, as he spoke,

From the sharp ridges of the hill,  
All downward to the banks of Till,  
Was wreathed in sable smoke.  
Volumed and fast, and rolling far,  
The cloud enveloped Scotland's war,  
As down the hill they broke ;  
Nor martial shout, nor minstrel tone,  
Announced their march ; their tread alone,  
At times one warning trumpet blown,  
At times a stifled hum,  
Told England, from his mountain-throne  
King James did rushing come. —  
Scarce could they hear, or see their foes,  
Until at weapon-point they close. —  
They close, in clouds of smoke and dust,  
With sword-sway and with lance's thrust ;  
And such a yell was there,  
Of sudden and portentous birth,  
As if men fought upon the earth,  
And fiends in upper air ;  
O life and death were in the shout,  
Recoil and rally, charge and rout,  
And triumph and despair.  
Long look'd the anxious squires ; their eye  
Could in the darkness nought descry.

## XXVI.

At length the freshening western blast  
Aside the shroud of battle cast ;  
And, first, the ridge of mingled spears  
Above the brightening cloud appears ;  
And in the smoke the pennons flew,  
As in the storm the white sea-mew.  
Then mark'd they, dashing broad and far,  
The broken billows of the war,  
And plumed crests of chieftains brave  
Floating like foam upon the wave ;  
But nought distinct they see :  
Wide raged the battle on the plain ;  
Spears shook, and falchions flash'd amain ;  
Fell England's arrow-flight like rain ;  
Crests rose, and stoop'd, and rose again,  
Wild and disorderly.



Amid the scene of tumult, high  
They saw Lord Marmion's falcon fly :  
And stainless Tunstall's banner white,  
And Edmund Howard's lion bright,  
Still bear them bravely in the fight ;

Although against them come,  
Of gallant Gordons many a one,  
And many a stubborn Bâdenoch-man,  
And many a rugged Border clan,  
With Huntly, and with Home.

## XXVII.

Far on the left, unseen the while,  
Stanley broke Lennox and Argyle ;  
Though there the western mountaineer  
Rush'd with bare bosom on the spear,  
And flung the feeble targe aside,  
And with both hands the broadsword plied,  
'Twas vain : — But Fortune, on the right,  
With fickle smile, cheer'd Scotland's fight.  
Then fell that spotless banner white,

The Howard's lion fell ;  
Yet still Lord Marmion's falcon flew  
With wavering flight, while fiercer grew  
Around the battle-yell.  
The Border slogan rent the sky !  
A Home ! a Gordon ! was the cry :  
Loud were the clanging blows ;  
Advanced, — forced back, — now low, now high,

The pennon sunk and rose ;  
As bends the bark's mast in the gale,  
When rent are rigging, shrouds, and sail,  
It waver'd 'mid the foes.

No longer Blount the view could bear :  
" By heaven and all its saints ! I swear,  
I will not see it lost !

Fitz-Eustace, you with Lady Clare  
May bid your beads, and patter prayer, —  
I gallop to the host."

And to the fray he rode amain,  
Follow'd by all the archer train.  
The fiery youth, with desperate charge,

Made, for a space, an opening large, —  
 The rescued banner rose, —  
 But darkly closed the war around,  
 Like pine-tree, rooted from the ground,  
 It sunk among the foes.  
 Then Eustace mounted too : — yet staid,  
 As loath to leave the helpless maid,  
 When, fast as shaft can fly,  
 Blood-shot his eyes, his nostrils spread,  
 The loose rein dangling from his head,  
 Housing and saddle bloody red,  
 Lord Marmion's steed rush'd by;  
 And Eustace, maddening at the sight,  
 A look and sign to Clara cast,  
 To mark he would return in haste,  
 Then plunged into the fight.

## XXVIII.

Ask me not what the maiden feels,  
 Left in that dreadful hour alone :  
 Perchance her reason stoops, or reels ;  
 Perchance a courage, not her own,  
 Braces her mind to desperate tone. —  
 The scatter'd van of England wheels ; —  
 She only said, as loud in air  
 The tumult roar'd, “ Is Wilton there ? ” —  
 They fly, or, madden'd by despair,  
 Fight but to die, — “ Is Wilton there ? ”  
 With that, straight up the hill there rode  
 Two horsemen drench'd with gore,  
 And in their arms, a helpless load,  
 A wounded knight they bore.  
 His hand still strain'd the broken brand ;  
 His arms were smear'd with blood and sand.  
 Dragg'd from among the horses' feet,  
 With dinted shield, and helmet beat,  
 The falcon-crest and plumage gone,  
 Can that be haughty Marmion ! . . .  
 Young Blount his armor did unlace,  
 And, gazing on his ghastly face,  
 Said — “ By Saint George, he's gone !  
 That spear-wound has our master sped, —

And see, the deep cut on his head !

Good-night to Marmion." —

"Unnurtured Blount ! thy brawling cease :

He opes his eyes," said Eustace ; "peace !"

## XXIX.

When, doff'd his casque, he felt free air,

Around 'gan Marmion wildly stare : —

"Where's Harry Blount ? Fitz-Eustace where ?

Linger ye here, ye hearts of hare !

Redeem my pennon, — charge again !

Cry — 'Marmion to the rescue !' — Vain !

Last of my race, on battle-plain

That shout shall ne'er be heard again ! —

Yet my last thought is England's — fly,

To Dacre bear my signet ring :

Tell him his squadrons up to bring. —

Fitz-Eustace, to Lord Surrey hie ;

Tunstall lies dead upon the field,

His life-blood stains the spotless shield :

Edmund is down : — my life is reft ;

The Admiral alone is left.

Let Stanley charge with spur of fire, —

With Chester charge, and Lancashire,

Full upon Scotland's central host,

Or victory and England's lost. —

Must I bid twice ? — hence, varlets ! fly !

Leave Marmion here alone — to die."

They parted, and alone he lay ;

Clare drew her from the sight away,

Till pain wrung forth a lowly moan,

And half he murmur'd, — "Is there none,

Of all my halls have nurst,

Page, squire, or groom, one cup to bring

Of blessed water from the spring,

To slake my dying thirst !"

## XXX.

O, woman ! in our hours of ease,

Uncertain, coy, and hard to please,

And variable as the shade

By the light quivering aspen made ;

When pain and anguish wring the brow,  
 A ministering angel thou! —  
 Scarce were the piteous accents said,  
 When, with the Baron's casque, the maid  
     To the nigh streamlet ran:  
 Forgot were hatred, wrongs, and fears;  
 The plaintive voice alone she hears,  
     Sees but the dying man.  
 She stoop'd her by the runnel's side,  
     But in abhorrence backward drew;  
 For, oozing from the mountain's side,  
 Where raged the war, a dark-red tide  
     Was curdling in the streamlet blue.  
 Where shall she turn! — behold her mark  
     A little fountain cell,  
 Where water, clear as diamond-spark,  
     In a stone basin fell.  
 Above, some half-worn letters say,  
 Drink . weary . pilgrim . drink . and . pray .  
 For . the . kind . soul . of . Sybil . Gray .  
     Who . built . this . cross . and . well .  
 She fill'd the helm, and back she hied,  
 And with surprise and joy espied  
     A Monk supporting Marmion's head;  
 A pious man, whom duty brought  
 To dubious verge of battle fought,  
     To shrieve the dying, bless the dead.

## XXXI.

Deep drank Lord Marmion of the wave,  
 And, as she stoop'd his brow to lave —  
 "Is it the hand of Clare," he said,  
 "Or injured Constance, bathes my head?"  
     Then, as remembrance rose, —  
 "Speak not to me of shrift or prayer!  
     I must redress her woes.  
 Short space, few words, are mine to spare;  
 Forgive and listen, gentle Clare!" —  
     "Alas!" she said, "the while, —  
 O, think of your immortal weal!  
 In vain for Constance is your zeal;  
     She — died at Holy Isle."

Lord Marmion started from the ground,  
 As light as if he felt no wound ;  
 Though in the action burst the tide,  
 In torrents from his wounded side.  
 " Then it was truth," he said — " I knew  
 That the dark presage must be true. —  
 I would the Fiend, to whom belongs  
 The vengeance due to all her wrongs,

Would spare me but a day !  
 For wasting fire, and dying groan,  
 And priests slain on the altar-stone  
 Might bribe him for delay.

It may not be ! — this dizzy trance —  
 Curse on yon base marauder's lance,  
 And doubly cursed my failing brand !  
 A sinful heart makes feeble hand."  
 Then, fainting, down on earth he sunk,  
 Supported by the trembling Monk.

## XXXII.

With fruitless labor, Clara bound,  
 And strove to stanch the gushing wound :  
 The Monk, with unavailing cares,  
 Exhausted all the Church's prayers.  
 Ever, he said, that, close and near,  
 A lady's voice was in his ear,  
 And that the priest he could not hear ;

For that she ever sung,  
*" In the lost battle, borne down by the flying,  
 Where mingles war's rattle with groans of the dying !"*

So the notes rung ; —  
 " Avoid thee, Fiend ! — with cruel hand,  
 Shake not the dying sinner's sand ! —  
 O, look, my son, upon yon sign  
 Of the Redeemer's grace divine ;

O, think on faith and bliss ! —  
 By many a death-bed I have been,  
 And many a sinner's parting seen,  
 But never aught like this." —  
 The war, that for a space did fail,  
 Now trebly thundering swell'd the gale,  
 And — STANLEY ! was the cry ; —

A light on Marmion's visage spread,  
And fired his glazing eye :  
With dying hand, above his head,  
He shook the fragment of his blade,  
And shouted "Victory! —  
Charge, Chester, charge! On, Stanley, on!"  
Were the last words of Marmion.

## XXXIII.

By this, though deep the evening fell,  
Still rose the battle's deadly swell,  
For still the Scots, around their King,  
Unbroken, fought in desperate ring.  
Where's now their victor vaward wing,  
Where Huntly, and where Home? —  
O for a blast of that dread horn,  
On Fontarabian echoes borne,  
That to King Charles did come,  
When Rowland brave, and Olivier,  
And every paladin and peer,  
On Roncesvalles died!  
Such blast might warn them, not in vain,  
To quit the plunder of the slain,  
And turn the doubtful day again,  
While yet on Flodden side,  
Afar, the Royal Standard flies,  
And round it toils, and bleeds, and dies,  
Our Caledonian pride!  
In vain the wish — for far away,  
While spoil and havoc mark their way,  
Near Sybil's Cross the plunderers stray.  
"O, Lady," cried the Monk, "away!"  
And placed her on her steed,  
And led her to the chapel fair,  
Of Tillmouth upon Tweed.  
There all the night they spent in prayer,  
And at the dawn of morning, there  
She met her kinsman, Lord Fitz-Clare.

## XXXIV.

But as they left the dark'ning heath,  
More desperate grew the strife of death.

The English shafts in volleys hail'd,  
In headlong charge their horse assail'd ;  
Front, flank, and rear, the squadrons sweep  
To break the Scottish circle deep,  
That fought around their King.  
But yet, though thick the shafts as snow,  
Though charging knights like whirlwinds go,  
Though bill-men ply the ghastly blow,  
Unbroken was the ring ;  
The stubborn spear-men still made good  
Their dark impenetrable wood,  
Each stepping where his comrade stood,  
The instant that he fell.  
No thought was there of dastard flight ;  
Link'd in the serried phalanx tight,  
Groom fought like noble, squire like knight,  
As fearlessly and well ;  
Till utter darkness closed her wing  
O'er their thin host and wounded King.  
Then skilful Surrey's sage commands  
Led back from strife his shatter'd bands ;  
And from the charge they drew,  
As mountain-waves, from wasted lands,  
Sweep back to ocean blue.  
Then did their loss his foemen know ;  
Their King, their Lords, their mightiest low,  
They melted from the field as snow,  
When streams are swoln and south winds blow,  
Dissolves in silent dew.  
Tweed's echoes heard the ceaseless plash,  
While many a broken band,  
Disorder'd, through her currents dash,  
To gain the Scottish land ;  
To town and tower, to down and dale,  
To tell red Flodden's dismal tale,  
And raise the universal wail.  
Tradition, legend, tune, and song,  
Shall many an age that wail prolong :  
Still from the sire the son shall hear  
Of the stern strife, and carnage drear,  
Of Flodden's fatal field,  
Where shiver'd was fair Scotland's spear,  
And broken was her shield !



## XXXV.

Day dawns upon the mountain's side : —  
 There, Scotland ! lay thy bravest pride,  
 Chiefs, knights, and nobles, many a one :  
 The sad survivors all are gone. —  
 View not that corpse mistrustfully,  
 Defaced and mangled though it be ;  
 Nor to yon Border castle high,  
 Look northward with upbraiding eye ;  
     Nor cherish hope in vain,  
 That, journeying far on foreign strand,  
 The Royal Pilgrim to his land  
     May yet return again.  
 He saw the wreck his rashness wrought ;  
 Reckless of life, he desperate fought,  
     And fell on Flodden plain :  
 And well in death his trusty brand,  
 Firm clench'd within his manly hand,  
     Beseem'd the Monarch slain.  
 But, O ! how changed since yon blithe night ! —  
 Gladly I turn me from the sight,  
     Unto my tale again.

## XXXVI.

Short is my tale : — Fitz-Eustace' care  
 A pierced and mangled body bare  
 To moated Lichfield's lofty pile ;  
 And there, beneath the southern aisle,  
 A tomb, with Gothic sculpture fair,  
 Did long Lord Marmion's image bear,  
 (Now vainly for its site you look ;  
 'Twas levell'd, when fanatic Brook  
 The fair cathedral storm'd and took ;  
 But, thanks to Heaven, and good Saint Chad !  
 A guerdon meet the spoiler had !)  
 There erst was martial Marmion found,  
 His feet upon a couchant hound,  
     His hands to heaven upraised ;  
 And all around, on scutcheon rich,  
 And tablet carved, and fretted niche,  
     His arms and feats were blazed.  
 And yet, though all was carved so fair,

And priest for Marmion breathed the prayer,  
The last Lord Marmion lay not there.  
From Ettrick woods, a peasant swain  
Follow'd his lord to Flodden plain, —  
One of those flowers, whom plaintive lay  
In Scotland mourns as “wede away :”  
Sore wounded, Sybil's Cross he spied,  
And dragg'd him to its foot, and died,  
Close by the noble Marmion's side.  
The spoilers stripp'd and gash'd the slain,  
And thus their corpses were mista'en ;  
And thus, in the proud Baron's tomb,  
The lowly woodsman took the room.

## XXXVII.

Less easy task it were, to show  
Lord Marmion's nameless grave, and low.  
They dug his grave e'en where he lay,  
But every mark is gone ;  
Time's wasting hand has done away  
The simple Cross of Sybil Gray,  
And broke her font of stone ;  
But yet out from the little hill  
Oozes the slender springlet still.  
Oft halts the stranger there,  
For thence may best his curious eye  
The memorable field descry ;  
And shepherd boys repair  
To seek the water-flag and rush,  
And rest them by the hazel bush,  
And plait their garlands fair ;  
Nor dream they sit upon the grave  
That holds the bones of Marmion brave. —  
When thou shalt find the little hill,  
With thy heart commune, and be still.  
If ever, in temptation strong,  
Thou left'st the right path for the wrong ;  
If every devious step, thus trod,  
Still led thee further from the road ;  
Dread thou to speak presumptuous doom  
On noble Marmion's lowly tomb ;  
But say, “ He died a gallant knight,  
With sword in hand, for England's right.”

## XXXVIII.

I do not rhyme to that dull elf,  
 Who cannot image to himself,  
 That, all through Flodden's dismal night,  
 Wilton was foremost in the fight;  
 That, when brave Surrey's steed was slain,  
 'Twas Wilton mounted him again;  
 'Twas Wilton's brand that deepest hew'd,  
 Amid the spearmen's stubborn wood:  
 Unnamed by Hollinshed or Hall,  
 He was the living soul of all;  
 That, after fight, his faith made plain,  
 He won his rank and lands again;  
 And charged his old paternal shield  
 With bearings won on Flodden Field.  
 Nor sing I to that simple maid,  
 To whom it must in terms be said,  
 That King and kinsmen did agree,  
 To bless fair Clara's constancy;  
 Who cannot, unless I relate,  
 Paint to her mind the bridal's state;  
 That Wolsey's voice the blessing spoke,  
 More, Sands, and Denny, pass'd the joke:  
 That Bluff King Hal the curtain drew,  
 And Catherine's hand the stocking threw;  
 And afterwards, for many a day,  
 That it was held enough to say,  
 In blessing to a wedded pair,  
 "Love they like Wilton and like Clare!"

## L'ENVOY.

## TO THE READER.

WHY then a final note prolong,  
 Or lengthen out a closing song,  
 Unless to bid the gentles speed,  
 Who long have listed to my rede?  
 To Statesmen grave, if such may deign  
 To read the Minstrel's idle strain,  
 Sound head, clean hand, and piercing wit,  
 And patriotic heart — as PITT!

A garland for the hero's crest,  
And twined by her he loves the best ;  
To every lovely lady bright,  
What can I wish but faithful knight?  
To every faithful lover too,  
What can I wish but lady true ?  
And knowledge to the studious sage ;  
And pillow to the head of age.  
To thee, dear school-boy, whom my lay  
Has cheated of thy hour of play,  
Light task, and merry holiday !  
To all, to each, a fair good night,  
And pleasing dreams, and slumbers light !



THE LADY OF THE LAKE.

A POEM.

*IN SIX CANTOS.*

## ARGUMENT.

*The Scene of the following Poem is laid chiefly in the vicinity of Loch Katrine, in the Western Highlands of Perthshire. The time of Action includes Six Days, and the transactions of each Day occupy a Canto.*



## THE LADY OF THE LAKE.

THREE years separated Scott's second poetical venture from his first ; but the "Lady of the Lake" followed "Marmion" after an interval of little more than a couple of years. Scott has told us himself the alarm of his aunt,<sup>1</sup> when she heard that he was meditating another appeal to public favor, lest he should in any way injure the great popularity he had already achieved, or, in her own words, lest standing so high he got a severe fall if he attempted to climb higher. "And a favorite," she added, sententiously, "will not be permitted to stumble with impunity." But Scott, without being guilty of any overweening self-confidence, had taken the measure of his powers, and felt that he might safely make the effort. Besides, he conceived that he held his distinguished position as the most successful poet of the day, on much the same condition as the champion of the prize-ring holds the belt — that of being always ready to show proofs of his skill. The result fully justified his resolution. Measured even by the standard of the "Minstrel" and "Marmion," the "Lady of the Lake" possessed merits of its own, which raised his reputation still higher. Jeffrey's prediction has been perfectly fulfilled, that the "Lady of the Lake" would be "oftener read hereafter than either of the former ;" and it is generally acknowledged to be, in Lockhart's words, "the most interesting, romantic, picturesque, and graceful of his great poems."

Scott's acquaintance with the Highlands dated from his boyhood. He had visited them before his sixteenth year, and repeatedly returned thither. His first introduction to the scenery of the "Lady of the Lake" was curious enough. He entered it, "riding in all the dignity of danger, with a front and rear-guard, and loaded arms." He was then a writer's apprentice, or, in English phrase, an attorney's clerk, and had been despatched by his father to enforce the execution of a legal instrument against some Maclarens, refractory tenants of Stewart of Appin. The armed force with which he was attended, consisting of a serjeant and six men from a Highland regiment lying in Stirling Castle, proved unnecessary, for no resistance was offered. The Maclarens had decamped, and Scott afterwards learned that they went to America. That such an escort should have been deemed needful, however, gives one an idea of what the Highlands and the inhabitants were even at a time so close upon our own day. In the course of his successive excursions to the Highlands, Scott made himself thoroughly ac-

<sup>1</sup> Miss Christian Rutherford, his mother's sister.

quainted with their recesses. He not only became familiar with the people, but, as one of his friends said, even the goats might have claimed him as an old friend. With characteristic conscientiousness, however, when he conceived the idea of the "Lady of the Lake," he did not trust to the impressions thus acquired to guide him in the descriptions of scenery, which form one of the chief charms of the poem, and render it, even now, one of the most minute and faithful hand-books to the region in which the drama of Ellen and the Knight of Snowdoun is enacted. He made a special tour, in order to verify the accuracy of the local circumstances of the story, and a hot gallop from the banks of Loch Vennachar to Stirling Castle measured the time which was allotted to King James for his flight after the combat with Roderick Dhu. This "fiery progress" was otherwise well known to him. Its principal land-marks were so many hospitable mansions where he had been a welcome and grateful guest—Blairdrummond, the residence of Lord Kaimes; Ochertyre, that of John Ramsay, the antiquary; and Kier, the seat of the Sterling family (now represented by Sir William Maxwell, M. P.). The usual route of the tourist reverses that of Fitzjames's desperate ride. Starting from "gray Stirling, with her towers and town," he leaves behind him the Abbey Craig, the site of the Wallace monument, and crosses the Forth and the Allan. The seats above mentioned are all in this neighborhood, while further on are Doune, with its ruined castle, once the residence of the Duke of Albany, and afterwards of Queen Mary, and Deanstown, where there are now extensive cotton-mills. Skirting the Teith, the traveller sees, on the north bank, Lanrick Castle, formerly the seat of the Chieftain of Clan-Gregor (Sir Evan Murray), and soon reaches Callander, which is now the favorite headquarters of those who wish to make excursions into the region which Scott rendered at once famous and fashionable. Benledi (2,882 feet,) rises on the north; Ben-a'an (1,800) is further west, and Benvenue (2,386) appears to the south. At the eastern extremity of Loch Vennachar, where it contracts into the river Teith, is Coilantogle, the scene of the fight between King James and Roderick Dhu. This was the limit of the chieftain's passport, "Clan-Alpine's outmost guard," and here, on terms of equality, he challenged the mysterious stranger.

"The Chief in silence strode before,  
And reached that torrent's sounding shore,  
Which, daughter of three mighty lakes,  
From Vennachar in silver breaks,  
Sweeps through the plain and ceaseless mines  
On Bochart the mouldering lines  
Where Rome, the Empress of the world,  
Of yore her eagle wings unfurled."

The last lines refer to the supposed traces of Roman occupation in the mounds on the haugh of Callander, and also near the railway station, which bear the name of the Roman Camp. It is, however, still matter of controversy whether these embankments are of human or of natural origin. At the other end of Loch Vennachar, which is five miles long, is the muster-place of Clan-Alpine—

Lanrick Mead. The sudden revelation of the ambuscade is supposed to take place a little farther to the westward, when

“Instant through copse and heath arose  
Bonnets and spears, and bended bows;  
On right, on left, above, below,  
Sprung up at once the lurking foe.”

Within a mile “Duncraggan’s huts,” appear, where Malise surrenders the fiery cross to the young Angus, by the side of his father’s bier, while the wail of the coronach for the dead is mingled with lamentations for the orphan’s danger.<sup>1</sup> About a mile up Glenfinlas (once a royal deer forest, and still inhabited almost exclusively by Stewarts), which here opens on the right, is a waterfall, which pours down

“— that huge cliff, whose ample verge  
Tradition calls the hero’s targe.”

where an outlaw is reported to have found shelter, and where the white bull was slain from which the chieftain sought an augury. The Brig of Turk, said to take its name from a ferocious boar which long haunted the spot, comes next; and then the road which gives access to the Trosachs, skirts the north shore of Loch Achray (Lake of the Laurel Field), “between the precipice and brake.”

Although the name “Trosachs” is often loosely applied to the whole region comprising Loch Katrine and the adjoining lakes, it belongs, strictly speaking, only to the part between Loch Achray and Loch Katrine.

The Trosachs, or Bristled Territory, as the word signifies in Gaelic, now form the entrance to one of the chief passes of the Grampians; but formerly it was a barrier to the progress of all, save the most alert and enterprising travellers. Until a comparatively recent time a ladder of branches and roots of trees, suspended over a steep crag, afforded the only means of traversing the defile.

“No pathway met the wanderer’s view,  
Unless he climbed with footing nice  
A far projecting precipice;  
The broom’s tough roots his ladder made,  
The hazel saplings lent their aid.”

It is an instance of the complete manner in which Scott has identified himself with this district, that the defile at the end of the Trosachs is known as Bealach-an-Duine (so called from a skirmish between the Highlanders and a party of Cromwell’s troops, in which one of the latter was killed), although the real pass of that name is at some distance to the east, on the old road. It was in the opening gorge of the Trosachs that Fitzjames’s “gallant gray” sank exhausted; and the guides point out this and the spots

<sup>1</sup> St. Bride’s Chapel, where Angus gives up the cross to Norman, the bridegroom, stands by the side of the Teith, near Loch Lubnaig, while the rest of the course was by Loch Voil, Loch Doine, to the source of Balvaig, and thence southwards down Strath-Gartney.

where the other incidents of the poem are represented as having occurred with as careful an identification as if they had been actually historic localities. The savage tumultuous wildness of the Trosachs is rendered more striking by, and in turn enhances, the rich loveliness of Loch Katrine, which suddenly appears in sight at a turn in the road. At the eastern end of the lake a projecting spit of land forms

"A narrow inlet still and deep,  
Affording scarce such breadth of brim  
As served the wild-duck's brood to swim."

Ellen's Isle, also, blocks the prospect. It is only by a rude scramble over the rocks in the direction of the old road that the point can be reached from which Fitzjames beheld the lake and its islets. Some lower eminences afford a partial view, but it is usually from the little steamer which plies during the season that the magnificent scene is disclosed to the tourist in its full extent. The lake measures about ten miles in length, and two in average breadth, and is of a winding serpentine form. Towards the west its shores are rocky and precipitous, and each side is clothed with dense copse-wood. The silver strand where the royal wanderer first sees Ellen, lies to the left of the road —

"A beach of pebbles bright as snow."

The island, with its tangled screen, lies in front, and a little lodge, answering to the description in the poem, was some years back to be found there. It was accidentally burned, however, and the hidden bower, like the heroine who lived there, must now be supplied by the imagination. In other respects Scott's picture is fully realized, nor do the guides forget to call forth the echo which answered Fitzjames's bugle. There are other islands besides this, and on one of them are the ruins of the Castle of Macgregor. On the south side of the lake, opposite to Ellen's Isle, is Coir-nan-Uriskan, or Goblin's Cave, where Douglas hid himself with his daughter, a vast circular hollow in the mountain, some few yards in diameter at the top, which gradually narrows towards the bottom. It is enclosed on all sides by steep cliffs, while brushwood and boulders hide the mouth of the cavern. The Urisks, from whom the place derives its name, were shaggy imps of the Brownie kind.

The Pass of Cattle, or Bealach-nam-bo (so called from the herds which the cattle-lifters used to drive this way), which may be reached either through an opening in the cave or by another path, is higher up. Scott declared this to be "the most sublime piece of scenery that the imagination can conceive;" and although much of its imposing effect has departed since the axe was laid to the overhanging timber on Benvenue, it has still a wild grandeur which, in some degree, justifies the eulogium.

When Scott first spoke of taking Rokeby as the scene of a poem, his friend Morritt jocularly declared that he should at once raise the rent of an inn on his estate as some compensation for the rush of tourists which might be expected to follow the publication of the

poem. The effect of the "Lady of the Lake" in this respect was certainly such as to justify the anticipation. The poem happened to appear in May, and before July the Trosachs had been invaded by a horde of pleasure-travellers. Crowds started for Loch Katrine. The little inns scattered at intervals along the high roads were filled to overflowing; and numerous cottages were turned into taverns. Shepherds and gillies suddenly found themselves able to make what they deemed splendid fortunes, by acting as guides to visitors who wished to compare the realities of nature with the poetical descriptions which had so enchanted them. It is stated as a fact that from the year in which the "Lady of the Lake" was published, the post-horse duty in Scotland rose in an extraordinary degree, and even continued to do so regularly for some time afterwards, as successive editions of the poem appeared, and as the circle of readers grew wider. The seclusion of the Lower Highlands was at an end. Before Scott made the region fashionable, the Trosachs were only a vague name to most of the townspeople of Edinburgh and Glasgow. Here and there a sportsman in search of grouse and capercaillie, or a man of business on some chance errand, ventured among those wilds; but the ordinary holiday-tourist never dreamed of turning his steps in that direction. But no sooner did the poem appear than not only Scots, but English, thronged to the Trosachs, which indeed quickly became more familiar to the latter, notwithstanding the long distance and tedious journey, than the Welsh hills which were comparatively close at hand. Such an influx of visitors, most of them wealthy, and willing to pay well for the comforts and luxuries to which they were accustomed at home, could not fail to have a marked effect on the condition of the natives. Their primitive simplicity, as well as perhaps in some cases their primitive honesty, has departed, but contact with strangers has quickened their intelligence, and widened their ideas, as well as filled their pockets. The money thus brought into the country has been applied, not only to improving the accommodation for travellers, but to the development of various industries, so that the route of the tourist may now for the most part be traced not merely by the natural beauties through which it passes, but by a thriving and busy population.





# THE LADY OF THE LAKE.

---

## CANTO FIRST.

### THE CHASE.

HARP of the North ! that mouldering long hast hung  
On the witch-elm that shades Saint Fillan's spring,  
And down the fitful breeze thy numbers flung,  
Till envious ivy did around thee cling,  
Muffling with verdant ringlet every string, —  
O Minstrel Harp, still must thine accents sleep ?  
Mid rustling leaves and fountains murmuring,  
Still must thy sweeter sounds their silence keep,  
Nor bid a warrior smile, nor teach a maid to weep ?

Not thus, in ancient days of Caledon,  
Was thy voice mute amid the festal crowd,  
When lay of hopeless love, or glory won,  
Aroused the fearful, or subdued the proud.  
At each according pause, was heard aloud  
Thine ardent symphony sublime and high !  
Fair dames and crested chiefs attention bow'd ;  
For still the burden of thy minstrelsy  
Was Knighthood's dauntless deed, and Beauty's match-  
less eye.

O wake once more ! how rude soe'er the hand  
That ventures o'er thy magic maze to stray ;  
O wake once more ! though scarce my skill command  
Some feeble echoing of thine earlier lay :  
Though harsh and faint, and soon to die away,  
And all unworthy of thy nobler strain,  
Yet if one heart throb higher at its sway,  
The wizard note has not been touch'd in vain.  
Then silent be no more ! Enchantress, wake again !



## I.

The stag at eve had drunk his fill,  
Where danced the moon on Monan's rill,  
And deep his midnight lair had made  
In lone Glenartney's hazel shade ;  
But, when the sun his beacon red  
Had kindled on Benvoirlich's head,  
The deep-mouth'd bloodhound's heavy bay  
Resounded up the rocky way,  
And faint, from farther distance borne,  
Were heard the clanging hoof and horn.

## II.

As Chief, who hears his warder call,  
"To arms! the foemen storm the wall,"  
The antler'd monarch of the waste  
Sprung from his heathery couch in haste.  
But, ere his fleet career he took,  
The dew-drops from his flanks he shook ;  
Like crested leader proud and high,  
Toss'd his beam'd frontlet to the sky ;  
A moment gazed adown the dale,  
A moment snuff'd the tainted gale,  
A moment listen'd to the cry,  
That thicken'd as the chase drew nigh ;  
Then, as the headmost foes appear'd,  
With one brave bound the copse he clear'd,  
And, stretching forward free and far,  
Sought the wild heaths of Uam-Var.

## III.

Yell'd on the view the opening pack ;  
Rock, glen, and cavern, paid them back ;  
To many a mingled sound at once  
The awaken'd mountain gave response.  
A hundred dogs bay'd deep and strong,  
Clatter'd a hundred steeds along,  
Their peal the merry horns rung out,  
A hundred voices join'd the shout ;  
With hark and whoop and wild halloo,  
No rest Benvoirlich's echoes knew.

Far from the tumult fled the roe,  
Close in her covert cower'd the doe,  
The falcon, from her cairn on high,  
Cast on the rout a wondering eye,  
Till far beyond her piercing ken  
The hurricane had swept the glen.  
Faint, and more faint, its failing din  
Return'd from cavern, cliff, and linn,  
And silence settled, wide and still,  
On the lone wood and mighty hill.

## IV.

Less loud the sounds of silvan war  
Disturb'd the heights of Uam-Var,  
And rous'd the cavern, where, 'tis told,  
A giant made his den of old ;  
For ere that steep ascent was won,  
High in his pathway hung the sun,  
And many a gallant, stay'd perforce,  
Was fain to breathe his faltering horse,  
And of the trackers of the deer,  
Scarce half the lessening pack was near ;  
So shrewdly on the mountain side,  
Had the bold burst their mettle tried.

## V.

The noble stag was pausing now  
Upon the mountain's southern brow,  
Where broad extended, far beneath,  
The varied realms of fair Menteith.  
With anxious eye he wander'd o'er  
Mountain and meadow, moss and moor,  
And ponder'd refuge from his toil,  
By far Lochard or Aberfoyle.  
But nearer was the copsewood gray  
That waved and wept on Loch Achray,  
And mingled with the pine-trees blue  
On the bold cliffs of Benvenue.  
Fresh vigor with the hope return'd,  
With flying foot the heath he spurn'd,  
Held westward with unwearied race,  
And left behind the panting chase.

## VI.

'Twere long to tell what steeds gave o'er,  
As swept the hunt through Cambusmore;  
What reins were tighten'd in despair,  
When rose Benledi's ridge in air;  
Who flagg'd upon Bochastle's heath,  
Who shunn'd to stem the flooded Teith,  
For twice that day, from shore to shore,  
The gallant stag swam stoutly o'er.  
Few were the stragglers following far,  
That reach'd the lake of Vennachar;  
And when the Brigg of Turk was won,  
The headmost horseman rode alone.

## VII.

Alone, but with unbated zeal,  
That horseman plied the scourge and steel;  
For jaded now, and spent with toil,  
Emboss'd with foam, and dark with soil,  
While every gasp with sobs he drew,  
The laboring stag strain'd full in view.  
Two dogs of black Saint Hubert's breed,  
Unmatch'd for courage, breath, and speed,  
Fast on his flying traces came,  
And all but won that desperate game;  
For, scarce a spear's length from his haunch,  
Vindictive toil'd the bloodhound stanch;  
Nor nearer might the dogs attain,  
Nor farther might the quarry strain.  
Thus up the margin of the lake,  
Between the precipice and brake,  
O'er stock and rock their race they take.

## VIII.

The Hunter mark'd that mountain high,  
The lone lake's western boundary,  
And deem'd the stag must turn to bay,  
Where that huge rampart barr'd the way;  
Already glorying in the prize,  
Measured his antlers with his eyes;  
For the death-wound and death-halloo,  
Muster'd his breath, his whinyard drew; —

But thundering as he came prepared,  
With ready arm and weapon bared,  
The wily quarry shunn'd the shock,  
And turn'd him from the opposing rock ;  
Then, dashing down a darksome glen,  
Soon lost to hound and Hunter's ken,  
In the deep Trosachs' wildest nook  
His solitary refuge took.  
There, while close couch'd, the thicket shed  
Cold dews and wild flowers on his head,  
He heard the baffled dogs in vain  
Rave through the hollow pass amain,  
Chiding the rocks that yell'd again.

## IX.

Close on the hounds the Hunter came,  
To cheer them on the vanish'd game ;  
But, stumbling in the rugged dell,  
The gallant horse exhausted fell.  
The impatient rider strove in vain  
To rouse him with the spur and rein,  
For the good steed, his labors o'er,  
Stretch'd his stiff limbs, to rise no more ;  
Then, touch'd with pity and remorse,  
He sorrow'd o'er the expiring horse.  
" I little thought, when first thy rein  
I slack'd upon the banks of Seine,  
That Highland eagle e'er should feed  
On thy fleet limbs, my matchless steed !  
Woe worth the chase, woe worth the day,  
That costs thy life, my gallant gray ! "

## X.

Then through the dell his horn resounds,  
From vain pursuit to call the hounds.  
Back limp'd, with slow and crippled pace,  
The sulky leaders of the chase ;  
Close to their master's side they press'd,  
With drooping tail and humbled crest ;  
But still the dingle's hollow throat  
Prolong'd the swelling bugle-note.  
The owlets started from their dream,  
The eagles answer'd with their scream,

Round and around the sounds were cast,  
Till echo seem'd an answering blast ;  
And on the Hunter hied his way,  
To join some comrades of the day ;  
Yet often paused, so strange the road,  
So wondrous were the scenes it show'd.

## XI.

The western waves of ebbing day  
Roll'd o'er the glen their level way ;  
Each purple peak, each flinty spire,  
Was bathed in floods of living fire.  
But not a setting beam could glow  
Within the dark ravines below,  
Where twined the path in shadow hid,  
Round many a rocky pyramid,  
Shooting abruptly from the dell  
Its thunder-splinter'd pinnacle ;  
Round many an insulated mass,  
The native bulwarks of the pass,  
Huge as the tower which builders vain  
Presumptuous piled on Shinar's plain.  
The rocky summits, split and rent,  
Form'd turret, dome, or battlement,  
Or seem'd fantastically set  
With cupola or minaret,  
Wild crests as pagod ever deck'd,  
Or mosque of Eastern architect.  
Nor were these earth-born castles bare,  
Nor lack'd they many a banner fair ;  
For, from their shiver'd brows display'd,  
Far o'er the unfathomable glade,  
All twinkling with the dewdrops sheen,  
The brier-rose fell in streamers green,  
And creeping shrubs, of thousand dyes,  
Waved in the west-wind's summer sighs.

## XII.

Boon nature scatter'd, free and wild,  
Each plant or flower, the mountain's child.  
Here eglantine embalm'd the air,  
Hawthorn and hazel mingled there ;  
The primrose pale and violet flower,

Found in each cliff a narrow bower ;  
Fox-glove and night-shade, side by side,  
Emblems of punishment and pride,  
Group'd their dark hues with every stain  
The weather-beaten crags retain.  
With boughs that quaked at every breath,  
Gray birch and aspen wept beneath ;  
Aloft, the ash and warrior oak  
Cast anchor in the rifted rock ;  
And, higher yet, the pine-tree hung  
His shatter'd trunk, and frequent flung,  
Where seem'd the cliffs to meet on high,  
His boughs athwart the narrow'd sky.  
Highest of all, where white peaks glanced,  
Where glist'ning streamers waved and danced,  
The wanderer's eye could barely view  
The summer heaven's delicious blue ;  
So wondrous wild, the whole might seem  
The scenery of a fairy dream.

## XIII.

Onward, amid the copse 'gan peep  
A narrow inlet, still and deep,  
Affording scarce such breadth of brim  
As served the wild duck's brood to swim.  
Lost for a space, through thickets veering,  
But broader when again appearing,  
Tall rocks and tufted knolls their face  
Could on the dark-blue mirror trace ;  
And farther as the hunter stray'd,  
Still broader sweep its channels made.  
The shaggy mounds no longer stood,  
Emerging from entangled wood,  
But, wave-encircled, seem'd to float,  
Like castle girdled with its moat ;  
Yet broader floods extending still  
Divide them from their parent hill,  
Till each, retiring, claims to be  
An islet in an inland sea.

## XIV.

And now, to issue from the glen,  
No pathway meets the wanderer's ken,

Unless he climb, with footing nice,  
A far projecting precipice.  
The broom's tough roots his ladder made,  
The hazel saplings lent their aid;  
And thus an airy point he won,  
Where, gleaming with the setting sun,  
One burnish'd sheet of living gold,  
Loch Katrine lay beneath him roll'd,<sup>1</sup>  
In all her length far winding lay,  
With promontory, creek, and bay,  
And islands that, empurpled bright,  
Floated amid the livelier light,  
And mountains, that like giants stand,  
To sentinel enchanted land.  
High on the south, huge Benvenue <sup>2</sup>  
Down on the lake in masses threw  
Craggs, knolls, and mounds, confusedly hurl'd,  
The fragments of an earlier world;  
A wildering forest feather'd o'er  
His ruin'd sides and summit hoar,  
While on the north, through middle air,  
Ben-an heaved high his forehead bare.

## XV.

From the steep promontory gazed  
The stranger, raptured and amazed,  
And, "What a scene were here," he cried,  
"For princely pomp, or churchman's pride!  
On this bold brow, a lordly tower;  
In that soft vale, a lady's bower;  
On yonder meadow, far away,  
The turrets of a cloister gray;  
How blithely might the bugle-horn  
Chide, on the lake, the lingering morn!  
How sweet, at eve, the lover's lute  
Chime, when the groves were still and mute!  
And, when the midnight moon should lave  
Her forehead in the silver wave,

<sup>1</sup> Loch Katrine is conjectured to have taken its name from the Catterins or Ketterins, a wild band of robbers who prowled about its shores to the terror of all wayfarers.

<sup>2</sup> Benvenue in Gaelic signifies Little mountain: and the implied comparison in respect of height relates to Benledi and Benlomond.



How solemn on the ear would come  
The holy matins' distant hum,  
While the deep peal's commanding tone  
Should wake, in yonder islet lone,  
A sainted hermit from his cell,  
To drop a bead with every knell —  
And bugle, lute, and bell, and all,  
Should each bewilder'd stranger call  
To friendly feast, and lighted hall.

## XVI.

"Blithe were it then to wander here !  
But now, — beshrew yon nimble deer,  
Like that same hermit's, thin and spare,  
The copse must give my evening fare ;  
Some mossy bank my couch must be,  
Some rustling oak my canopy.  
Yet pass we that ; the war and chase  
Give little choice of resting place ; —  
A summer night, in greenwood spent,  
Were but to-morrow's merriment :  
But hosts may in these wilds abound,  
Such as are better miss'd than found ;  
To meet with Highland plunderers here  
Were worse than loss of steed or deer. —  
I am alone ; — my bugle strain  
May call some straggler of the train ;  
Or, fall the worst that may betide,  
Ere now this falchion has been tried."

## XVII.

But scarce again his horn he wound,  
When lo ! forth starting at the sound,  
From underneath an aged oak,  
That slanted from the islet rock,  
A damsel guider of its way,  
A little skiff shot to the bay,  
That round the promontory steep  
Led its deep line in graceful sweep,  
Eddying, in almost viewless wave,  
The weeping willow twig to lave,  
And kiss, with whispering sound and slow,  
The beach of pebbles bright as snow.

The boat had touch'd this silver strand,  
Just as the Hunter left his stand,  
And stood conceal'd amid the brake,  
To view this Lady of the Lake.  
The maiden paused, as if again  
She thought to catch the distant strain.  
With head up-raised, and look intent,  
An eye and ear attentive bent,  
And locks flung back, and lips apart,  
Like monument of Grecian art,  
In listening mood, she seem'd to stand,  
The guardian Naiad of the strand.

## XVIII.

And ne'er did Grecian chisel trace  
A Nymph, a Naiad, or a Grace,  
Of finer form, or lovelier face!  
What though the sun, with ardent frown,  
Had slightly tinged her cheek with brown,—  
The sportive toil, which, short and light,  
Had dyed her glowing hue so bright,  
Served too in hastier swell to show  
Short glimpses of a breast of snow:  
What though no rule of courtly grace  
To measured mood had train'd her pace,—  
A foot more light, a step more true,  
Ne'er from the heath-flower dash'd the dew;  
E'en the slight harebell raised its head,  
Elastic from her airy tread:  
What though upon her speech there hung  
The accents of the mountain tongue,—  
Those silver sounds, so soft, so dear,  
The list'ner held his breath to hear!

## XIX.

A chieftain's daughter seem'd the maid;  
Her satin snood, her silken plaid,  
Her golden brooch such birth betray'd.  
And seldom was a snood amid  
Such wild luxuriant ringlets hid,

Whose glossy black to shame might bring  
The plumage of the raven's wing ;  
And seldom o'er a breast so fair,  
Mantled a plaid with modest care,  
And never brooch the folds combined  
Above a heart more good and kind.  
Her kindness and her worth to spy,  
You need but gaze on Ellen's eye;  
Not Katrine, in her mirror blue,  
Gives back the shaggy banks more true,  
Than every free-born glance confess'd  
The guileless movements of her breast ;  
Whether joy danced in her dark eye,  
Or woe or pity claim'd a sigh,  
Or filial love was glowing there,  
Or meek devotion pour'd a prayer,  
Or tale of injury call'd forth  
The indignant spirit of the North.  
One only passion unreveal'd,  
With maiden pride the maid conceal'd,  
Yet not less purely felt the flame ; —  
O ! need I tell that passion's name !

## XX.

Impatient of the silent horn,  
Now on the gale her voice was borne : —  
“ Father ! ” she cried ; the rocks around  
Loved to prolong the gentle sound.  
A while she paused, no answer came, —  
“ Malcolm, was thine the blast ? ” the name  
Less resolutely utter'd fell,  
The echoes could not catch the swell.  
“ A stranger I,” the Huntsman said,  
Advancing from the hazel shade.  
The maid, alarm'd, with hasty oar,  
Push'd her light shallop from the shore,  
And when a space was gain'd between,  
Closer she drew her bosom's screen ;  
(So forth the startled swan would swing,  
So turn to prune his ruffled wing.)  
Then safe, though flutter'd and amazed,  
She paused, and on the stranger gazed.

Not his the form, nor his the eye,  
That youthful maidens wont to fly.

## XXI.

On his bold visage middle age  
Had slightly press'd its signet sage,  
Yet had not quench'd the open truth  
And fiery vehemence of youth ;  
Forward and frolic glee was there,  
The will to do, the soul to dare,  
The sparkling glance, soon blown to fire,  
Of hasty love, or headlong ire.  
His limbs were cast in manly mould,  
For hardy sports or contest bold ;  
And though in peaceful garb array'd,  
And weaponless, except his blade,  
His stately mien as well implied  
A high-born heart, a martial pride,  
As if a Baron's crest he wore,  
And sheathed in armor trode the shore.  
Slighting the petty need he show'd,  
He told of his benighted road ;  
His ready speech flow'd fair and free,  
In phrase of gentlest courtesy ;  
Yet seem'd that tone, and gesture bland,  
Less used to sue than to command.

## XXII.

A while the maid the stranger eyed,  
And, reassured, at length replied,  
That Highland halls were open still  
To wilder'd wanderers of the hill.  
"Nor think you unexpected come  
To yon lone isle, our desert home ;  
Before the heath had lost the dew,  
This morn, a couch was pull'd for you ;  
On yonder mountain's purple head  
Have ptarmigan and heath-cock bled,  
And our broad nets have swept the mere,  
To furnish forth your evening cheer." —  
"Now, by the rood, my lovely maid,  
Your courtesy has err'd," he said ;

"No right have I to claim, misplaced,  
The welcome of expected guest.  
A wanderer, here by fortune tost,  
My way, my friends, my courser lost,  
I ne'er before, believe me, fair,  
Have ever drawn your mountain air,  
Till on this lake's romantic strand,  
I found a fay in fairy land!" —

## XXIII.

"I well believe," the maid replied,  
As her light skiff approach'd the side, —  
"I well believe that ne'er before  
Your foot has trod Loch Katrine's shore ;  
But yet, as far as yesternight,  
Old Allan-bane foretold your plight, —  
A gray-hair'd sire, whose eye intent  
Was on the vision'd future bent.  
He saw your steed, a dappled gray,  
Lie dead beneath the birchen way ;  
Painted exact your form and mien,  
Your hunting suit of Lincoln green,  
That tassell'd horn so gaily gilt,  
That falchion's crooked blade and hilt,  
That cap with heron plumage trim,  
And yon two hounds so dark and grim.  
He bade that all should ready be,  
To grace a guest of fair degree ;  
But light I held his prophecy,  
And deem'd it was my father's horn,  
Whose echoes o'er the lake were borne."

## XXIV.

The stranger smiled : — "Since to your home  
A destined errant-knight I come,  
Announced by prophet sooth and old,  
Doom'd, doubtless, for achievement bold,  
I'll lightly front each high emprise,  
For one kind glance of those bright eyes.  
Permit me, first, the task to guide,  
Your fairy frigate o'er the tide."  
The maid, with smile suppress'd and sly,  
The toil unwonted saw him try ;

For seldom sure, if e'er before,  
His noble hand had grasp'd an oar :  
Yet with main strength his strokes he drew,  
And o'er the lake the shallop flew ;  
With heads erect, and whimpering cry,  
The hounds behind their passage ply.  
Nor frequent does the bright oar break  
The darkening mirror of the lake,  
Until the rocky isle they reach,  
And moor their shallop on the beach.

## XXV.

The stranger view'd the shore around ;  
'Twas all so close with copsewood bound,  
Nor track nor pathway might declare  
That human foot frequented there,  
Until the mountain-maiden show'd  
A clambering unsuspected road,  
That winded through the tangled screen,  
And open'd on a narrow green,  
Where weeping birch and willow round  
With their long fibres swept the ground ;  
Here, for retreat in dangerous hour,  
Some chief had framed a rustic bower.

## XXVI.

It was a lodge of ample size,  
But strange of structure and device ;  
Of such materials, as around  
The workman's hand had readiest found.  
Lopp'd of their boughs, their hoar trunks bared,  
And by the hatchet rudely squared,  
To give the walls their destined height,  
The sturdy oak and ash unite ;  
While moss and clay and leaves combined  
To fence each crevice from the wind.  
The lighter pine-trees, overhead,  
Their slender length for rafters spread,  
And wither'd heath and rushes dry  
Supplied a russet canopy.  
Due westward, fronting to the green,  
A rural portico was seen,  
Aloft on native pillars borne,

Of mountain fir with bark unshorn,  
 Where Ellen's hand had taught to twine  
 The ivy and Idæan vine,  
 The clematis, the favor'd flower  
 Which boasts the name of virgin-bower,  
 And every hardy plant could bear  
 Loch Katrine's keen and searching air.  
 An instant in this porch she staid,  
 And gaily to the stranger said,  
 "On heaven and on thy lady call,  
 And enter the enchanted hall!"

## XXVII.

"My hope, my heaven, my trust must be,  
 My gentle guide, in following thee." —  
 He cross'd the threshold — and a clang  
 Of angry steel that instant rang.  
 To his bold brow his spirit rush'd,  
 But soon for vain alarm he blush'd,  
 When on the floor he saw display'd,  
 Cause of the din, a naked blade  
 Dropp'd from the sheath, that careless flung  
 Upon a stag's huge antlers swung;  
 For all around, the walls to grace,  
 Hung trophies of the fight or chase:  
 A target there, a bugle here,  
 A battle-axe, a hunting spear,  
 And broadswords, bows, and arrows store,  
 With the tusk'd trophies of the boar.  
 Here grins the wolf as when he died,  
 And there the wild-cat's brindled hide  
 The frontlet of the elk adorns,  
 Or mantles o'er the bison's horns;  
 Pennons and flags defaced and stain'd,  
 That blackening streaks of blood retain'd,  
 And deer-skins, dappled, dun, and white,  
 With otter's fur and seal's unite,  
 In rude and uncouth tapestry all,  
 To garnish forth the silvan hall.

## XXVIII.

The wondering stranger round him gazed,  
 And next the fallen weapon raised: —



Few were the arms whose sinewy strength  
Sufficed to stretch it forth at length.  
And as the brand he poised and sway'd,  
"I never knew but one," he said,  
"Whose stalwart arm might brook to wield  
A blade like this in battle-field."  
She sigh'd, then smiled and took the word ;  
"You see the guardian champion's sword :  
As light it trembles in his hand,  
As in my grasp a hazel wand ;  
My sire's tall form might grace the part  
Of Ferragus, or Ascabart ;  
But in the absent giant's hold  
Are women now, and menials old."

## XXIX.

The mistress of the mansion came,  
Mature of age, a graceful dame ;  
Whose easy step and stately port  
Had well become a princely court,  
To whom, though more than kindred knew,  
Young Ellen gave a mother's due.  
Meet welcome to her guest she made,  
And every courteous rite was paid,  
That hospitality could claim,  
Though all unask'd his birth and name.  
Such then the reverence to a guest,  
That fellest foe might join the feast  
And from his deadliest foeman's door  
Unquestion'd turn, the banquet o'er.  
At length his rank the stranger names,  
"The Knight of Snowdown, James Fitz-James ;  
Lord of a barren heritage,  
Which his brave sires, from age to age,  
By their good swords had held with toil ;  
His sire had fall'n in such turmoil,  
And he, God wot, was forced to stand  
Oft for his right with blade in hand.  
This morning with Lord Moray's train  
He chased a stalwart stag in vain,  
Outstripp'd his comrades, miss'd the deer,  
Lost his good steed, and wander'd here."

## XXX.

Fain would the Knight in turn require  
 The name and state of Ellen's sire.  
 Well show'd the elder lady's mien,  
 That courts and cities she had seen ;  
 Ellen, though more her looks display'd  
 The simple grace of silvan maid,  
 In speech and gesture, form and face,  
 Show'd she was come of gentle race.  
 'Twere strange in ruder rank to find  
 Such looks, such manners, and such mind.  
 Each hint the Knight of Snowdoun gave,  
 Dame Margaret heard with silence grave ;  
 Or Ellen, innocently gay,  
 Turn'd all inquiry light away : —  
 "Weird women we ! by dale and down  
 We dwell, afar from tower and town.  
 We stem the flood, we ride the blast,  
 On wandering knights our spells we cast ;  
 While viewless minstrels touch the string,  
 'Tis thus our charmed rhymes we sing."  
 She sung, and still a harp unseen  
 Fill'd up the symphony between.

## XXXI.

## SONG.

"Soldier, rest ! thy warfare o'er,  
 Sleep the sleep that knows not breaking :  
 Dream of battled fields no more,  
 Days of danger, nights of waking.  
 In our isle's enchanted hall,  
 Hands unseen thy couch are strewing,  
 Fairy strains of music fall,  
 Every sense in slumber dewing.  
 Soldier, rest ! thy warfare o'er,  
 Dream of fighting-fields no more :  
 Sleep the sleep that knows not breaking.  
 Morn of toil, nor night of waking.

"No rude sound shall reach thine ear,  
 Armor's clang or war-steed champing,  
 Trump nor pibroch summon here  
 Mustering clan, or squadron tramping.

Yet the lark's shrill fife may come  
 At the day-break from the fallow,  
 And the bittern sound his drum,  
 Booming from the sedgy shallow.  
 Ruder sounds shall none be near,  
 Guards nor warders challenge here,  
 Here's no war-steed's neigh and champing,  
 Shouting clans or squadrons stamping."

## XXXII.

She paused — then, blushing, led the lay  
 To grace the stranger of the day.  
 Her mellow notes awhile prolong  
 The cadence of the flowing song,  
 Till to her lips in measured frame  
 The minstrel verse spontaneous came.

## SONG CONTINUED.

"Huntsman, rest! thy chase is done,  
 While our slumbrous spells assail ye,  
 Dream not, with the rising sun,  
 Bugles here shall sound reveillé.  
 Sleep! the deer is in his den;  
 Sleep! thy hounds are by thee lying;  
 Sleep! nor dream in yonder glen,  
 'How thy gallant steed lay dying.  
 Huntsman, rest! thy chase is done,  
 Think not of the rising sun,  
 For at dawning to assail ye,  
 Here no bugles sound reveillé."

## XXXIII.

The hall was clear'd — the stranger's bed  
 Was there of mountain heather spread,  
 Where oft a hundred guests had lain,  
 And dream'd their forest sports again.  
 But vainly did the heath-flower shed  
 Its moorland fragrance round his head;  
 Not Ellen's spell had lull'd to rest  
 The fever of his troubled breast.  
 In broken dreams the image rose  
 Of varied perils, pains, and woes:  
 His steed now flounders in the brake,

Now sinks his barge upon the lake ;  
Now leader of a broken host,  
His standard falls, his honor's lost.  
Then, — from my couch may heavenly might  
Chase that worst phantom of the night ! —  
Again return'd the scenes of youth,  
Of confident undoubting truth ;  
Again his soul he interchanged  
With friends whose hearts were long estranged.  
They come, in dim procession led,  
The cold, the faithless, and the dead ;  
As warm each hand, each brow as gay,  
As if they parted yesterday.  
And doubt distracts him at the view —  
O were his senses false or true ?  
Dream'd he of death, or broken vow,  
Or is it all a vision now ?

## XXXIV.

At length, with Ellen in a grove  
He seem'd to walk, and speak of love ;  
She listen'd with a blush and sigh,  
His suit was warm, his hopes were high.  
He sought her yielded hand to clasp,  
And a cold gauntlet met his grasp :  
The phantom's sex was changed and gone,  
Upon its head a helmet shone ;  
Slowly enlarged to giant size,  
With darken'd cheek and threatening eyes,  
The grisly visage, stern and hoar,  
To Ellen still a likeness bore. —  
He woke, and, panting with affright,  
Recall'd the vision of the night.  
The hearth's decaying brands were red,  
And deep and dusky lustre shed,  
Half showing, half concealing, all  
The uncouth trophies of the hall.  
Mid those the stranger fix'd his eye  
Where that huge falchion hung on high,  
And thoughts on thoughts, a countless throng,  
Rush'd, chasing countless thoughts along,  
Until, the giddy whirl to cure,  
He rose, and sought the moonshine pure.

## XXXV.

The wild rose, eglantine, and broom,  
 Wasted around their rich perfume :  
 The birch-trees wept in fragrant balm,  
 The aspens slept beneath the calm ;  
 The silver light, with quivering glance,  
 Play'd on the water's still expanse, —  
 Wild were the heart whose passions' sway  
 Could rage beneath the sober ray !  
 He felt its calm, that warrior guest,  
 While thus he communed with his breast : —  
 " Why is it, at each turn I trace  
 Some memory of that exiled race ?  
 Can I not mountain-maiden spy,  
 But she must bear the Douglas eye ?  
 Can I not view a Highland brand,  
 But it must match the Douglas hand ?  
 Can I not frame a fever'd dream,  
 But still the Douglas is the theme ?  
 I'll dream no more — by manly mind  
 Not even in sleep is will resign'd.  
 My midnight orisons said o'er,  
 I'll turn to rest, and dream no more."  
 His midnight orisons he told,  
 A prayer with every bead of gold,  
 Consign'd to heaven his cares and woes,  
 And sunk in undisturb'd repose ;  
 Until the heath-cock shrilly crew,  
 And morning dawn'd on Benvenue.

## CANTO SECOND.

## THE ISLAND.

## I.

AT morn the black-cock trims his jetty wing,  
 'Tis morning prompts the linnet's blithest lay,  
 All Nature's children feel the matin spring  
 Of life reviving, with reviving day ;

And while yon little bark glides down the bay,  
Wafting the stranger on his way again,  
Morn's genial influence roused a minstrel gray,  
And sweetly o'er the lake was heard thy strain,  
Mix'd with the sounding harp, O white-hair'd Allan-bane!

## II.

## SONG.

"Not faster yonder rowers' might  
Flings from their oars the spray,  
Not faster yonder rippling bright,  
That tracks the shallop's course in light,  
Melts in the lake away,  
Than men from memory erase  
The benefits of former days ;  
Then, stranger, go ! good speed the while,  
Nor think again of the lonely isle.

"High place to thee in royal court,  
High place in battle line,  
Good hawk and hound for silvan sport,  
Where beauty sees the brave resort,  
The honor'd meed be thine !  
True be thy sword, thy friend sincere,  
Thy lady constant, kind, and dear,  
And lost in love and friendship's smile  
Be memory of the lonely isle.

## III.

## SONG CONTINUED.

"But if beneath yon southern sky  
A plaided stranger roam,  
Whose drooping crest and stifled sigh,  
And sunken cheek and heavy eye,  
Pine for his Highland home ;  
Then, warrior, then be thine to show  
The care that soothes a wanderer's woe ;  
Remember then thy hap ere while,  
A stranger in the lonely isle.

"Or if on life's uncertain main  
Mishap shall mar thy sail ;

If faithful, wise, and brave in vain,  
 Woe, want, and exile thou sustain  
 Beneath the fickle gale;  
 Waste not a sigh on fortune changed,  
 On thankless courts, or friends estranged,  
 But come where kindred worth shall smile,  
 To greet thee in the lonely isle."

## IV.

As died the sounds upon the tide,  
 The shallop reach'd the mainland side,  
 And ere his onward way he took,  
 The stranger cast a lingering look,  
 Where easily his eye might reach  
 The Harper on the islet beach,  
 Reclined against a blighted tree,  
 As wasted, gray, and worn as he.  
 To minstrel meditation given,  
 His reverend brow was raised to heaven,  
 As from the rising sun to claim  
 A sparkle of inspiring flame.  
 His hand, reclined upon the wire,  
 Seem'd watching the awakening fire;  
 So still he sate, as those who wait  
 Till judgment speak the doom of fate;  
 So still, as if no breeze might dare  
 To lift one lock of hoary hair;  
 So still, as life itself were fled,  
 In the last sound his harp had sped.

## V.

Upon a rock with lichens wild,  
 Beside him Ellen sate and smiled. —  
 Smiled she to see the stately drake  
 Lead forth his fleet upon the lake,  
 While her vex'd spaniel, from the beach,  
 Bay'd at the prize beyond his reach!  
 Yet tell me, then, the maid who knows,  
 Why deepen'd on her cheek the rose? —  
 Forgive, forgive, Fidelity!  
 Perchance the maiden smiled to see  
 Yon parting lingerer wave adieu,  
 And stop and turn to wave anew;



And, lovely ladies, ere your ire  
 Condemn the heroine of my lyre,  
 Show me the fair would scorn to spy,  
 And prize such conquest of her eye ;

## VI.

While yet he loiter'd on the spot,  
 It seem'd as Ellen mark'd him not ;  
 But when he turn'd him to the glade,  
 One courteous parting sign she made ;  
 And after, oft the knight would say,  
 That not when prize of festal day  
 Was dealt him by the brightest fair,  
 Who e'er wore jewel in her hair,  
 So highly did his bosom swell,  
 As at that simple mute farewell.  
 Now with a trusty mountain-guide,  
 And his dark stag-hounds by his side,  
 He parts — the maid, unconscious still,  
 Watch'd him wind slowly round the hill ;  
 But when his stately form was hid,  
 The guardian in her bosom chid —  
 "Thy Malcolm ! vain and selfish Maid !"  
 'Twas thus upbraiding conscience said, —  
 "Not so had Malcolm idly hung  
 On the smooth phrase of southern tongue ;  
 Not so had Malcolm strain'd his eye,  
 Another step than thine to spy. —  
 Wake, Allan-bane," aloud she cried,  
 To the old Minstrel by her side, —  
 "Arouse thee from thy moody dream !  
 I'll give thy harp heroic theme,  
 And warm thee with a noble name ;  
 Pour forth the glory of the Græme !" —  
 Scarce from her lip the word had rush'd,  
 When deep the conscious maiden blush'd ;  
 For of his clan in hall and bower,  
 Young Malcolm Græme was held the flower.

## VII.

The minstrel waked his harp — three times  
 Arose the well-known martial chimes,  
 And thrice their high heroic pride

In melancholy murmurs died.  
"Vainly thou bid'st, O noble maid,"  
Clasping his wither'd hands, he said,  
"Vainly thou bid'st me wake the strain,  
Though all unwont to bid in vain.  
Alas ! than mine a mightier hand  
Has tuned my harp, my strings has spann'd !  
I touch the chords of joy, but low  
And mournful answer notes of woe ;  
And the proud march, which victors tread,  
Sinks in the wailing for the dead.  
O well for me, if mine alone  
That dirge's deep prophetic tone !  
If, as my tuneful fathers said,  
This harp, which erst Saint Modan swayed,  
Can thus its master's fate foretell,  
Then welcome be the minstrel's knell !

## VIII.

"But ah ! dear lady, thus it sigh'd,  
The eve thy sainted mother died ;  
And such the sounds which, while I strove  
To wake a lay of war or love,  
Came marring all the festal mirth,  
Appalling me who gave them birth,  
And, disobedient to my call,  
Wail'd loud through Bothwell's banner'd hall,  
Ere Douglasses, to ruin driven,  
Were exiled from their native heaven. —  
Oh ! if yet worse mishap and woe,  
My master's house must undergo,  
Or aught but weal to Ellen fair,  
Brood in these accents of despair,  
No future bard, sad Harp ! shall fling  
Triumph or rapture from thy string ;  
One short, one final strain shall flow,  
Fraught with unutterable woe,  
Then shiver'd shall thy fragments lie,  
Thy master cast him down and die !"

## IX.

Soothing she answer'd him — "Assuage,  
Mine honor'd friend, the fears of age ;

All melodies to thee are known,  
 That harp has rung or pipe has blown,  
 In Lowland vale or Highland glen,  
 From Tweed to Spey — what marvel, then,  
 At times, unbidden notes should rise,  
 Confusedly bound in memory's ties,  
 Entangling, as they rush along,  
 The war-march with the funeral song? —  
 Small ground is now for boding fear;  
 Obscure, but safe, we rest us here.  
 My sire, in native virtue great,  
 Resigning lordship, lands, and state,  
 Not then to fortune more resign'd,  
 Than yonder oak might give the wind;  
 The graceful foliage storms may reave,  
 The noble stem they cannot grieve.  
 For me," — she stoop'd, and, looking round,  
 Pluck'd a blue hare-bell from the ground, —  
 "For me, whose memory scarce conveys  
 An image of more splendid days,  
 This little flower, that loves the lea,  
 May well my simple emblem be;  
 It drinks heaven's dew as blithe as rose  
 That in the King's own garden grows;  
 And when I place it in my hair,  
 Allan, a bard, is bound to swear  
 He ne'er saw coronet so fair."  
 Then playfully the chaplet wild  
 She wreath'd in her dark locks, and smiled.

## X.

Her smile, her speech, with winning sway,  
 Wiled the old harper's mood away.  
 With such a look as hermits throw,  
 When angels stoop to soothe their woe,  
 He gazed, till fond regret and pride  
 Thrill'd to a tear, then thus replied:  
 "Loveliest and best! thou little know'st  
 The rank, the honors, thou hast lost!  
 O might I live to see thee grace,  
 In Scotland's court, thy birth-right place,  
 To see my favorite's step advance,  
 The lightest in the courtly dance,

The cause of every gallant's sigh,  
And leading star of every eye,  
And theme of every minstrel's art,  
The Lady of the Bleeding Heart ! ”<sup>1</sup> —

## XI.

“ Fair dreams are these,” the maiden cried,  
(Light was her accent, yet she sigh'd ;  
“ Yet is this mossy rock to me  
Worth splendid chair and canopy ;  
Nor would my footsteps spring more gay  
In courtly dance than blithe strathspey,  
Nor half so pleased mine ear incline  
To royal minstrel's lay as thine.  
And then for suitors proud and high,  
To bend before my conquering eye, —  
Thou flattering bard ! thyself wilt say,  
That grim Sir Roderick owns its sway.  
The Saxon scourge, Clan-Alpine's pride,  
The terror of Loch-Lomond's side,  
Would, at my suit, thou know'st, delay  
A Lennox foray — for a day.” —

## XII.

The ancient bard his glee repress'd ;  
“ Ill hast thou chosen theme for jest !  
For who, through all this western wild,  
Named Black Sir Roderick e'er, and smiled !  
In Holy-Rood a knight he slew ;  
I saw, when back the dirk he drew,  
Courtiers give place before the stride  
Of the undaunted homicide ;  
And since, though outlaw'd, hath his hand  
Full sternly kept his mountain land.  
Who else dared give — ah ! woe the day,  
That I such hated truth should say —  
The Douglas, like a stricken deer,  
Disown'd by every noble peer,  
Even the rude refuge we have here ?  
Alas, this wild marauding Chief  
Alone might hazard our relief,

<sup>1</sup> The well-known cognizance of the Douglas family.

And now thy maiden charms expand,  
Looks for his guerdon in thy hand ;  
Full soon may dispensation sought,  
To back his suit, from Rome be brought.  
Then, though an exile on the hill,  
Thy father, as the Douglas, still  
Be held in reverence and fear ;  
And though to Roderick thou'rt so dear,  
That thou might'st guide with silken thread,  
Slave of thy will, this chieftain dread ;  
Yet, O loved maid, thy mirth refrain !  
Thy hand is on a lion's mane." —

## XIII.

"Minstrel," the maid replied, and high  
Her father's soul glanced from her eye,  
"My debts to Roderick's house I know ;  
All that a mother could bestow,  
To Lady Margaret's care I owe,  
Since first an orphan in the wild  
She sorrow'd o'er her sister's child ;  
To her brave chieftain son, from ire  
Of Scotland's king who shrouds my sire,  
A deeper, holier debt is owed ;  
And, could I pay it with my blood,  
Allan ! Sir Roderick should command  
My blood, my life, — but not my hand.  
Rather will Ellen Douglas dwell  
A votaress in Maronnan's cell ;  
Rather through realms beyond the sea,  
Seeking the world's cold charity,  
Where ne'er was spoke a Scottish word,  
And ne'er the name of Douglas heard,  
An outcast pilgrim will she rove,  
Than wed the man she cannot love.

## XIV.

"Thou shakest, good friend, thy tresses gray —  
That pleading look, what can it say  
But what I own ? — I grant him brave,  
But wild as Bracklinn's thundering wave ;  
And generous — save vindictive mood,  
Or jealous transport, chafe his blood :

I grant him true to friendly band,  
 As his claymore is to his hand ;  
 But O ! that very blade of steel  
 More mercy for a foe would feel :  
 I grant him liberal, to fling  
 Among his clan the wealth they bring,  
 When back by lake and glen they wind,  
 And in the Lowland leave behind,  
 Where once some pleasant hamlet stood,  
 A mass of ashes slaked with blood.  
 The hand that for my father fought,  
 I honor, as his daughter ought ;  
 But can I clasp it reeking red,  
 From peasants slaughter'd in their shed ?  
 No ! wildly while his virtues gleam,  
 They make his passions darker seem,  
 And flash along his spirit high,  
 Like lightning o'er the midnight sky.  
 While yet a child, — and children know,  
 Instinctive taught, the friend and foe, —  
 I shudder'd at his brow of gloom,  
 His shadowy plaid, and sable plume ;  
 A maiden gown, I ill could bear  
 His haughty mien and lordly air :  
 But, if thou join'st a suitor's claim,  
 In serious mood, to Roderick's name,  
 I thrill with anguish ! or, if e'er  
 A Douglas knew the word, with fear.  
 To change such odious theme were best, —  
 What think'st thou of our stranger guest ? ” —

## XV.

“ What think I of him ? — woe the while  
 That brought such wanderer to our isle !  
 Thy father's battle-brand, of yore  
 For Tine-man forged by fairy lore,  
 What time he leagued, no longer foes,  
 His Border spears with Hotspur's bows,  
 Did, self-unscaubarded, foreshow  
 The footstep of a secret foe.  
 If courtly spy hath harbor'd here,  
 What may we for the Douglas fear ?  
 What for this island, deem'd of old



Clan-Alpine's last and surest hold ?  
 If neither spy nor foe, I pray  
 What yet may jealous Roderick say ?  
 — Nay, wave not thy disdainful head,  
 Bethink thee of the discord dread,  
 That kindled when at Beltane game  
 Thou ledst the dance with Malcolm Græme ;  
 Still, though thy sire the peace renew'd,  
 Smoulders in Roderick's breast the feud ;  
 Beware ! — But hark, what sounds are these ?  
 My dull ears catch no faltering breeze,  
 No weeping birch, nor aspens wake,  
 Nor breath is dimpling in the lake,  
 Still is the canna's <sup>1</sup> hoary beard,  
 Yet, by my minstrel faith, I heard —  
 And hark again ! some pipe of war  
 Sends the bold pibroch from afar."

## XVI.

Far up the lengthen'd lake were spied  
 Four darkening specks upon the tide,  
 That, slow enlarging on the view,  
 Four mann'd and masted barges grew,  
 And, bearing downwards from Glengyle,  
 Steer'd full upon the lonely isle ;  
 The point of Brianchoil they passed,  
 And, to the windward as they cast,  
 Against the sun they gave to shine  
 The bold Sir Roderick's banner'd Pine.  
 Nearer and nearer as they bear,  
 Spears, pikes, and axes flash in air.  
 Now might you see the tartans brave,  
 And plaids and plumage dance and wave :  
 Now see the bonnets sink and rise,  
 As his tough oar the rower plies ;  
 See, flashing at each sturdy stroke,  
 The wave ascending into smoke ;  
 See the proud pipers on the bow,  
 And mark the gaudy streamers flow  
 From their loud chanter's <sup>2</sup> down, and sweep  
 The furrow'd bosom of the deep,

<sup>1</sup> The cotton-grass.<sup>2</sup> The *tube* of the bagpipe.



As, rushing through the lake amain,  
They plied the ancient Highland strain.

## XVII.

Ever, as on they bore, more loud  
And louder rung the pibroch proud.  
At first the sound, by distance tame,  
Mellow'd along the waters came,  
And, lingering long by cape and bay,  
Wail'd every harsher note away,  
Then bursting bolder on the ear,  
The clan's shrill Gathering they could hear ;  
Those thrilling sounds, that call the might  
Of Old Clan-Alpine to the fight.  
Thick beat the rapid notes, as when  
The mustering hundreds shake the glen,  
And hurrying at the signal dread,  
The batter'd earth returns their tread.  
Then prelude light, of livelier tone,  
Express'd their merry marching on,  
Ere peal of closing battle rose,  
With mingled outcry, shrieks, and blows ;  
And mimic din of stroke and ward,  
As broadsword upon target jarr'd ;  
And groaning pause, ere yet again,  
Condensed, the battle yell'd amain ;  
The rapid charge, the rallying shout,  
Retreat borne headlong into rout,  
And bursts of triumph, to declare  
Clan-Alpine's conquest — all were there.  
Nor ended thus the strain ; but slow  
Sunk in a moan prolong'd and low,  
And changed the conquering clarion swell,  
For wild lament o'er those that fell.

## XVIII.

The war pipes ceased ; but lake and hill  
Were busy with their echoes still ;  
And, when they slept, a vocal strain  
Bade their hoarse chorus wake again,  
While loud a hundred clansmen raise  
Their voices in their Chieftain's praise.

Each boatman, bending to his oar,  
 With measured sweep the burden bore,  
 In such wild cadence, as the breeze  
 Makes through December's leafless trees.  
 The chorus first could Allan know,  
 "Roderick Vich Alpine, ho ! iro !"  
 And near, and nearer as they row'd,  
 Distinct the martial ditty flow'd.

## XIX.

## BOAT SONG.

Hail to the chief who in triumph advances !  
 Honor'd and bless'd be the ever-green Pine !  
 Long may the tree, in his banner that glances,  
 Flourish, the shelter and grace of our line !  
     Heaven send it happy dew,  
     Earth lend it sap anew,  
 Gayly to burgeon, and broadly to grow,  
     While every Highland glen  
     Sends our shout back agen,  
 "Roderigh Vich Alpine dhu, ho ! ieroe !"

Ours is no sapling, chance-sown by the fountain,  
 Blooming at Beltane, in winter to fade ;  
 When the whirlwind has stripp'd every leaf on the  
     mountain,  
 The more shall Clan-Alpine exult in her shade.  
     Moor'd in the rifted rock,  
     Proof to the tempest's shock,  
 Firmer he roots him the ruder it blow :  
     Menteith and Breadalbane, then,  
     Echo his praise agen,  
 Roderigh Vich Alpine dhu, ho ! ieroe !"

## XX.

Proudly our pibroch has thrill'd in Glen Fruin,  
 And Bannochar's groans to our slogan replied ;  
 Glen Luss and Ross-dhu, they are smoking in ruin,  
 And the best of Loch-Lomond lie dead on her side.  
     Widow and Saxon maid  
     Long shall lament our raid,

Think of Clan-Alpine with fear and with woe ;  
 Lenox and Leven-glen  
 Shake when they hear agen,  
 "Roderigh Vich Alpine dhu, ho ! ieroe !"

Row, vassals, row, for the pride of the Highlands !  
 Stretch to your oars, for the ever-green Pine !  
 O, that the rose-bud that graces yon islands,  
 Were wreathed in a garland around him to twine !  
 O that some seedling gem,  
 Worthy such noble stem,  
 Honor'd and bless'd in their shadow might grow !  
 Loud should Clan-Alpine then  
 Ring from her deepest glen,  
 "Roderigh<sup>1</sup> Vich Alpine dhu, ho ! ieroe !"

## XXI.

With all her joyful female band,  
 Had Lady Margaret sought the strand.  
 Loose on the breeze their tresses flew,  
 And high their snowy arms they threw,  
 As echoing back with shrill acclaim,  
 And chorus wild, the Chieftain's name ;  
 While, prompt to please, with mother's art,  
 The darling passion of his heart,  
 The Dame called Ellen to the strand,  
 To greet her kinsman ere he land :  
 "Come, loiterer, come ! a Douglas thou,  
 And shun to wreath a victor's brow ?" —  
 Reluctantly and slow, the maid  
 The unwelcome summoning obey'd,  
 And, when a distant bugle rung,  
 In the mid-path aside she sprung : —  
 "List, Allan-bane ! from mainland cast  
 I hear my father's signal blast.  
 Be ours," she cried, "the skiff to guide,  
 And waft him from the mountain-side."  
 Then, like a sunbeam, swift and bright,  
 She darted to her shallop light,  
 And, eagerly while Roderick scann'd,  
 For her dear form, his mother's band,

<sup>1</sup> Roderick the Black, son of Alpine.

The islet far behind her lay,  
And she had landed in the bay.

## XXII.

Some feelings are to mortals given,  
With less of earth in them than heaven :  
And if there be a human tear  
From passion's dross refined and clear,  
A tear so limpid and so meek,  
It would not stain an angel's cheek,  
'Tis that which pious fathers shed  
Upon a duteous daughter's head !  
And as the Douglas to his breast  
His darling Ellen closely press'd,  
Such holy drops her tresses steep'd,  
Though 'twas an hero's eye that weep'd.  
Nor while on Ellen's faltering tongue  
Her filial welcomes crowded hung,  
Mark'd she, that fear (affection's proof)  
Still held a graceful youth aloof ;  
No ! not till Douglas named his name,  
Although the youth was Malcolm Græme.

## XXIII.

Allan, with wistful look the while,  
Mark'd Roderick landing on the isle ;  
His master piteously he eyed,  
Then gazed upon the Chieftain's pride,  
Then dash'd, with hasty hand, away  
From his dimm'd eye the gathering spray ;  
And Douglas, as his hand he laid  
On Malcolm's shoulder, kindly said,  
" Canst thou, young friend, no meaning spy  
In my poor follower's glistening eye ?  
I'll tell thee : — he recalls the day,  
When in my praise he led the lay  
O'er the arch'd gate of Bothwell proud,  
While many a minstrel answer'd loud,  
When Percy's Norman pennon, won  
In bloody field, before me shone,  
And twice ten knights, the least a name  
As mighty as yon Chief may claim,  
Gracing my pomp, behind me came.

Yet trust me, Malcolm, not so proud  
Was I of all that marshall'd crowd,  
Though the waned crescent own'd my might,  
And in my train troop'd lord and knight,  
Though Blantyre hymn'd her holiest lays,  
And Bothwell's bards flung back my praise,  
As when this old man's silent tear,  
And this poor maid's affection dear,  
A welcome give more kind and true,  
Than aught my better fortunes knew.  
Forgive, my friend, a father's boast,  
O ! it out-beggars all I lost !”

## XXIV.

Delightful praise ! — like summer rose,  
That brighter in the dew-drop glows,  
The bashful maiden's cheek appear'd,  
For Douglas spoke, and Malcolm heard.  
The flush of shame-faced joy to hide,  
The hounds, the hawk, her cares divide ;  
The loved caresses of the maid  
The dogs with crouch and whimper paid ;  
And, at her whistle, on her hand  
The falcon took his favorite stand,  
Closed his dark wing, relax'd his eye,  
Nor, though unhooded, sought to fly.  
And, trust, while in such guise she stood,  
Like fabled Goddess of the wood,  
That if a father's partial thought  
O'erweigh'd her worth, and beauty aught,  
Well might the lover's judgment fail  
To balance with a juster scale ;  
For with each secret glance he stole,  
The fond enthusiast sent his soul.

## XXV.

Of stature tall, and slender frame,  
But firmly knit, was Malcolm Græme.  
The belted plaid and tartan hose  
Did ne'er more graceful limbs disclose ;  
His flaxen hair, of sunny hue,  
Curl'd closely round his bonnet blue.

Train'd to the chase, his eagle eye  
The ptarmigan in snow could spy :  
Each pass, by mountain, lake, and heath,  
He knew, through Lennox and Menteith ;  
Vain was the bound of dark-brown doe,  
When Malcolm bent his sounding bow,  
And scarce that doe, though wing'd with fear,  
Outstripp'd in speed the mountaineer :  
Right up Ben-Lomond could he press,  
And not a sob his toil confess.  
His form accorded with a mind  
Lively and ardent, frank and kind ;  
A blither heart, till Ellen came,  
Did never love nor sorrow tame ;  
It danced as lightsome in his breast,  
As play'd the feather on his crest.  
Yet friends, who nearest knew the youth,  
His scorn of wrong, his zeal for truth,  
And bards, who saw his features bold,  
When kindled by the tales of old,  
Said, were that youth to manhood grown,  
Not long should Roderick Dhu's renown  
Be foremost voiced by mountain fame,  
But quail to that of Malcolm Græme.

## XXVI.

Now back they wend their watery way,  
And, "O my sire!" did Ellen say,  
"Why urge thy chase so far astray?  
And why so late return'd?" And why" —  
The rest was in her speaking eye.  
"My child, the chase I follow far,  
'Tis mimicry of noble war ;  
And with that gallant pastime reft  
Were all of Douglas I have left.  
I met young Malcolm as I stray'd  
Far eastward, in Glenfinlas' shade,  
Nor stray'd I safe ; for, all around,  
Hunters and horsemen scour'd the ground.  
This youth, though still a royal ward,  
Risk'd life and land to be my guard,  
And through the passes of the wood  
Guided my steps, not unpursued ;

And Roderick shall his welcome make,  
Despite old spleen, for Douglas' sake.  
Then must he seek Strath-Endrick glen,  
Nor peril aught for me agen."

## XXVII.

Sir Roderick, who to meet them came,  
Redden'd at sight of Malcolm Græme,  
Yet, not in action, word, or eye,  
Fail'd aught in hospitality.  
In talk and sport they whiled away  
The morning of that summer day ;  
But at high noon a courier light  
Held secret parley with the knight,  
Whose moody aspect soon declared,  
That evil were the news he heard.  
Deep thought seem'd toiling in his head ;  
Yet was the evening banquet made,  
Ere he assembled round the flame,  
His mother, Douglas, and the Græme,  
And Ellen, too ; then cast around  
His eyes, then fix'd them on the ground,  
As studying phrase that might avail  
Best to convey unpleasant tale.  
Long with his dagger's hilt he play'd,  
Then raised his haughty brow, and said : —

## XXVIII.

"Short be my speech ; — nor time affords,  
Nor my plain temper, glozing words.  
Kinsman and father, — if such name  
Douglas vouchsafe to Roderick's claim ;  
Mine honor'd mother : — Ellen — why,  
My cousin, turn away thine eye ? —  
And Græme ; in whom I hope to know  
Full soon a noble friend or foe,  
When age shall give thee thy command,  
And leading in thy native land, —  
List all ! — The King's vindictive pride  
Boasts to have tamed the Border-side,  
Where chiefs, with hound and hawk who came  
To share their monarch's silvan game,



Themselves in bloody toils were snared ;  
 And when the banquet they prepared,  
 And wide their loyal portals flung,  
 O'er their own gateway struggling hung.  
 Loud cries their blood from Meggat's mead,  
 From Yarrow braes, and banks of Tweed,  
 Where the lone streams of Ettrick glide,  
 And from the silver Teviot's side ;  
 The dales, where martial clans did ride,  
 Are now one sheep-walk, waste and wide.  
 This tyrant of the Scottish throne,  
 So faithless, and so ruthless known,  
 Now hither comes ; his end the same,  
 The same pretext of silvan game.  
 What grace for Highland Chiefs, judge ye  
 By fate of Border chivalry.  
 Yet more ; amid Glenfinlas green,  
 Douglas, thy stately form was seen.  
 This by espial sure I know :  
 Your counsel in the streight I show."

## XXIX.

Ellen and Margaret fearfully  
 Sought comfort in each other's eye,  
 Then turn'd their ghastly look, each one,  
 This to her sire, that to her son.  
 The hasty color went and came  
 In the bold cheek of Malcolm Græme ;  
 But from his glance it well appear'd,  
 'Twas but for Ellen that he fear'd ;  
 While, sorrowful, but undismay'd,  
 The Douglas thus his counsel said : —  
 " Brave Roderick, though the tempest roar,  
 It may but thunder and pass o'er ;  
 Nor will I here remain an hour,  
 To draw the lightning on thy bower ;  
 For well thou know'st, at this gray head  
 The royal bolt were fiercest sped.  
 For thee, who, at thy King's command,  
 Canst aid him with a gallant band,  
 Submission, homage, humbled pride,  
 Shall turn the monarch's wrath aside.

Poor remnants of the Bleeding Heart,  
Ellen and I will seek, apart,  
The refuge of some forest cell,  
There, like the hunted quarry, dwell,  
Till on the mountain and the moor,  
The stern pursuit be pass'd and o'er." —

## XXX.

"No, by mine honor," Roderick said,  
"So help me Heaven, and my good blade!  
No, never! Blasted be yon Pine,  
My father's ancient crest and mine,  
If from its shade in danger part  
The lineage of the Bleeding Heart!  
Hear my blunt speech: grant me this maid  
To wife, thy counsel to mine aid;  
To Douglas, leagued with Roderick Dhu,  
Will friends and allies flock enow;  
Like cause of doubt, distrust, and grief,  
Will bind to us each Western Chief.  
When the loud pipes my bridal tell,  
The Links of Forth shall hear the knell,  
The guards shall start in Stirling's porch;  
And, when I light the nuptial torch,  
A thousand villages in flames  
Shall scare the slumbers of King James!  
— Nay, Ellen, blench not thus away,  
And, mother, cease these signs, I pray;  
I meant not all my heart might say. —  
Small need of inroad, or of fight,  
When the sage Douglas may unite  
Each mountain clan in friendly band,  
To guard the passes of their land,  
Till the foil'd king, from pathless glen,  
Shall bootless turn him home agen." —

## XXXI.

There are who have, at midnight hour,  
In slumber scaled a dizzy tower,  
And, on the verge that beetled o'er  
The ocean tide's incessant roar,  
Dream'd calmly out their dangerous dream,  
Till waken'd by the morning beam;

When dazzled by the eastern glow,  
 Such startler cast his glance below,  
 And saw unmeasured depth around,  
 And heard unintermitted sound,  
 And thought the battled fence so frail,  
 It waved like cobweb in the gale ; —  
 Amid his senses' giddy wheel,  
 Did he not desperate impulse feel,  
 Headlong to plunge himself below,  
 And meet the worst his fears foreshow ? —  
 Thus, Ellen, dizzy and astound,  
 As sudden ruin yawn'd around,  
 By crossing terrors wildly toss'd,  
 Still for the Douglas fearing most,  
 Could scarce the desperate thought withstand,  
 To buy his safety with her hand.

## XXXII.

Such purpose dread could Malcolm spy  
 In Ellen's quivering lip and eye,  
 And eager rose to speak — but ere  
 His tongue could hurry forth his fear,  
 Had Douglas mark'd the hectic strife,  
 Where death seem'd combating with life ;  
 For to her cheek, in feverish flood,  
 One instant rush'd the throbbing blood,  
 Then ebbing back, with sudden sway,  
 Left its domain as wan as clay.  
 " Roderick, enough ! 'enough ! " he cried,  
 " My daughter cannot be thy bride ;  
 Not that the blush to wooer dear,  
 Nor paleness that of maiden fear.  
 It may not be — forgive her, Chief,  
 Nor hazard aught for our relief.  
 Against his sovereign, Douglas ne'er  
 Will level a rebellious spear.  
 'Twas I that taught his youthful hand  
 To rein a steed and wield a brand ;  
 I see him yet, the princely boy !  
 Not Ellen more my pride and joy ;  
 I love him still, despite my wrongs,  
 By hasty wrath, and slanderous tongues.

O seek the grace you well may find,  
Without a cause to mine combined."

## XXXIII.

Twice through the hall the Chieftain strode;  
The waving of his tartans broad,  
And darken'd brow, where wounded pride  
With ire and disappointment vied,  
Seem'd, by the torch's gloomy light,  
Like the ill Demon of the night,  
Stooping his pinions' shadowy sway  
Upon the nighted pilgrim's way:  
But, unrequited Love! thy dart  
Plunged deepest its envenom'd smart,  
And Roderick, with thine anguish stung,  
At length the hand of Douglas wrung,  
While eyes, that mock'd at tears before,  
With bitter drops were running o'er.  
The death-pangs of long-cherish'd hope  
Scarce in that ample breast had scope,  
But, struggling with his spirit proud,  
Convulsive heaved its chequer'd shroud,  
While every sob — so mute were all —  
Was heard distinctly through the hall.  
The son's despair, the mother's look  
Ill might the gentle Ellen brook;  
She rose, and to her side there came,  
To aid her parting steps, the Græme.

## XXXIV.

Then Roderick from the Douglas broke —  
As flashes flame through sable smoke,  
Kindling its wreaths, long, dark, and low,  
To one broad blaze of ruddy glow,  
So the deep anguish of despair  
Burst, in fierce jealousy, to air.  
With stalwart grasp his hand he laid  
On Malcolm's breast and belted plaid:  
"Back, beardless boy!" he sternly said,  
"Back, minion! hold'st thou thus at nought  
The lesson I so lately taught?  
This roof, the Douglas, and that maid,  
Thank thou for punishment delay'd."

Eager as greyhound on his game,  
 Fiercely with Roderick grappled Græme.  
 "Perish my name, if aught afford  
 Its Chieftain safety save his sword!"  
 Thus as they strove, their desperate hand  
 Gripped to the dagger or the brand,  
 And death had been — but Douglas rose,  
 And thrust between the struggling foes  
 His giant strength: — "Chieftains, forego!  
 I hold the first who strikes, my foe. —  
 Madmen, forbear your frantic jar!  
 What! is the Douglas fall'n so far,  
 His daughter's hand is doom'd the spoil  
 Of such dishonorable broil!"  
 Sullen and slowly, they unclasp,  
 As struck with shame, their desperate grasp,  
 And each upon his rival glared,  
 With foot advanced, and blade half bared.

## xxxv.

Ere yet the brands aloft were flung,  
 Margaret on Roderick's mantle hung,  
 And Malcolm heard his Ellen's scream,  
 As falter'd through terrific dream.  
 Then Roderick plunged in sheath his sword,  
 And veil'd his wrath in scornful word:  
 "Rest safe till morning; pity 'twere  
 Such cheek should feel the midnight air!  
 Then mayest thou to James Stuart tell,  
 Roderick will keep the lake and fell,  
 Nor lackey, with his freeborn clan,  
 The pageant pomp of earthly man.  
 More would he of Clan-Alpine know,  
 Thou canst our strength and passes show. —  
 Malise, what ho!" — his henchman came;  
 "Give our safe-conduct to the Græme."  
 Young Malcolm answer'd, calm and bold,  
 "Fear nothing for thy favorite hold;  
 The spot, an angel deign'd to grace,  
 Is bless'd, though robbers haunt the place.  
 Thy churlish courtesy for those  
 Reserve, who fear to be thy foes.  
 As safe to me the mountain way

At midnight as in blaze of day,  
 Though with his boldest at his back,  
 Even Roderick Dhu beset the track. —  
 Brave Douglas, — lovely Ellen, — nay,  
 Nought here of parting will I say.  
 Earth does not hold a lonesome glen,  
 So secret, but we meet agen. —  
 Chieftain ! we too shall find an hour," —  
 He said, and left the silvan bower.

## XXXVI.

Old Allan follow'd to the strand,  
 (Such was the Douglas's command,)  
 And anxious told, how, on the morn,  
 The stern Sir Roderick deep had sworn,  
 The Fiery Cross should circle o'er  
 Dale, glen, and valley, down, and moor.  
 Much were the peril to the Græme,  
 From those who to the signal came ;  
 Far up the lake 'twere safest land,  
 Himself would row him to the strand.  
 He gave his counsel to the wind,  
 While Malcolm did, unheeding, bind,  
 Round dirk and pouch and broadsword roll'd,  
 His ample plaid in tighten'd fold,  
 And stripp'd his limbs to such array,  
 As best might suit the watery way, —

## XXXVII.

Then spoke abrupt : " Farewell to thee,  
 Pattern of old fidelity ! "  
 The Minstrel's hand he kindly press'd, —  
 " O ! could I point a place of rest !  
 My sovereign holds in ward my land,  
 My uncle leads my vassal band ;  
 To tame his foes, his friends to aid,  
 Poor Malcolm has but heart and blade.  
 Yet, if there be one faithful Græme,  
 Who loves the chieftain of his name,  
 Not long shall honor'd Douglas dwell,  
 Like hunted stag in mountain cell ;  
 Nor, ere yon pride-swoll'n robber dare, —  
 I may not give the rest to air !



Tell Roderick Dhu, I owed him nought,  
Not the poor service of a boat,  
To waft me to yon mountain-side."  
Then plunged he in the flashing tide.  
Bold o'er the flood his head he bore,  
And stoutly steer'd him from the shore ;  
And Allan strain'd his anxious eye,  
Far 'mid the lake his form to spy.  
Darkening across each puny wave,  
To which the moon her silver gave,  
Fast as the cormorant could skim,  
The swimmer plied each active limb ;  
Then landing in the moonlight dell,  
Loud shouted of his weal to tell.  
The Minstrel heard the far halloo,  
And joyful from the shore withdrew.

## CANTO THIRD.

## THE GATHERING.

## I.

TIME rolls his ceaseless course. The race of yore,  
Who danced our infancy upon their knee,  
And told our marvelling boyhood legends store,  
Of their strange ventures happ'd by land or sea,  
How are they blotted from the things that be !

How few, all weak and wither'd of their force,  
Wait on the verge of dark eternity,  
Like stranded wrecks, the tide returning hoarse,  
To sweep them from our sight ! Time rolls his cease-  
less course.

Yet live there still who can remember well,

How, when a mountain chief his bugle blew,  
Both field and forest, dingle, cliff, and dell,  
And solitary heath, the signal knew ;

And fast the faithful clan around him drew,

What time the warning note was keenly wound,  
What time aloft their kindred banner flew,

While clamorous war-pipes yell'd the gathering sound,  
And while the Fiery Cross glanced, like a meteor, round.



## II.

The Summer dawn's reflected hue  
To purple changed Loch Katrine blue ;  
Mildly and soft the western breeze  
Just kiss'd the lake, just stirr'd the trees,  
And the pleased lake, like maiden coy,  
Trembled but dimpled not for joy ;  
The mountain-shadows on her breast  
Were neither broken nor at rest ;  
In bright uncertainty they lie,  
Like future joys to Fancy's eye.  
The water-lily to the light  
Her chalice rear'd of silver bright ;  
The doe awoke, and to the lawn,  
Begemm'd with dewdrops, led her fawn ;  
The gray mist left the mountain side,  
The torrent show'd its glistening pride ;  
Invisible in flecked sky,  
The lark sent down her revelry ;  
The blackbird and the speckled thrush  
Good-morrow gave from brake and bush ;  
In answer coo'd the cushat dove  
Her notes of peace, and rest, and love.

## III.

No thought of peace, no thought of rest,  
Assuaged the storm in Roderick's breast.  
With sheathed broadsword in his hand,  
Abrupt he paced the islet strand,  
And eyed the rising sun, and laid  
His hand on his impatient blade.  
Beneath a rock, his vassals' care  
Was prompt the ritual to prepare,  
With deep and deathful meaning fraught ;  
For such Antiquity had taught  
Was preface meet, ere yet abroad  
The Cross of Fire should take its road.  
The shrinking band stood oft aghast  
At the impatient glance he cast ; —  
Such glance the mountain eagle threw,  
As, from the cliffs of Benvenue,  
She spread her dark sails on the wind,  
And, high in middle heaven reclined,

With her broad shadow on the lake,  
Silenced the warblers of the brake.

## IV.

A heap of wither'd boughs was piled,  
Of juniper and rowan wild,  
Mingled with shivers from the oak,  
Rent by the lightning's recent stroke.  
Brian, the Hermit, by it stood,  
Barefooted, in his frock and hood.  
His grisled beard and matted hair  
Obscured a visage of despair ;  
His naked arms and legs, seam'd o'er,  
The scars of frantic penance bore.  
That monk, of savage form and face,  
The impending danger of his race  
Had drawn from deepest solitude,  
Far in Benharrow's bosom rude.  
Not his the mien of Christian priest,  
But Druid's, from the grave released,  
Whose harden'd heart and eye might brook  
On human sacrifice to look ;  
And much, 'twas said, of heathen lore  
Mix'd in the charms he mutter'd o'er.  
The hallow'd creed gave only worse  
And deadlier emphasis of curse ;  
No peasant sought that Hermit's prayer,  
His cave the pilgrim shunn'd with care,  
The eager huntsman knew his bound,  
And in mid chase call'd off his hound ;  
Or if, in lonely glen or strath,  
The desert-dweller met his path,  
He pray'd, and sign'd the cross between,  
While terror took devotion's mien.

## V.

Of Brian's birth strange tales were told.  
His mother watch'd a midnight fold,  
Built deep within a dreary glen,  
Where scatter'd lay the bones of men,  
In some forgotten battle slain,  
And bleach'd by drifting wind and rain.

It might have tamed a warrior's heart,  
To view such mockery of his art !  
The knot-grass fetter'd there the hand,  
Which once could burst an iron band ;  
Beneath the broad and ample bone,  
That buckler'd heart to fear unknown,  
A feeble and a timorous guest,  
The field-fare framed her lowly nest ;  
There the slow blind-worm left his slime  
On the fleet limbs that mock'd at time ;  
And there, too, lay the leader's skull,  
Still wreath'd with chaplet, flush'd and full,  
For heath-bell, with her purple bloom,  
Supplied the bonnet and the plume.  
All night, in this sad glen, the maid  
Sate, shrouded in her mantle's shade ;  
— She said, no shepherd sought her side,  
No hunter's hand her snood untied,  
Yet ne'er again to braid her hair  
The virgin snood did Alice wear ;  
Gone was her maiden glee and sport,  
Her maiden girdle all too short,  
Nor sought she, from that fatal night,  
Or holy church or blessed rite,  
But lock'd her secret in her breast,  
And died in travail, unconfess'd.

## VI.

Alone, among his young compeers,  
Was Brian from his infant years ;  
A moody and heart-broken boy,  
Estranged from sympathy and joy,  
Bearing each taunt which careless tongue  
On his mysterious lineage flung.  
Whole nights he spent by moonlight pale,  
To wood and stream his hap to wail,  
Till, frantic, he as truth received  
What of his birth the crowd believed,  
And sought, in mist and meteor fire,  
To meet and know his Phantom Sire !  
In vain, to soothe his wayward fate,  
The cloister oped her pitying gate ;  
In vain, the learning of the age

Unclasp'd the sable-letter'd page ;  
Even in its treasures he could find  
Food for the fever of his mind.  
Eager he read whatever tells  
Of magic, cabala, and spells,  
And every dark pursuit allied  
To curious and presumptuous pride ;  
Till with fired brain and nerves o'erstrung,  
And heart with mystic horrors wrung,  
Desperate he sought Benharrow's den,  
And hid him from the haunts of men.

## VII.

The desert gave him visions wild,  
Such as might suit the spectre's child.  
Where with black cliffs the torrents toil,  
He watch'd the wheeling eddies boil,  
Till, from their foam, his dazzled eyes  
Beheld the River Demon rise ;  
The mountain mist took form and limb,  
Of noontide hag, or goblin grim ;  
The midnight wind came wild and dread,  
Swell'd with the voices of the dead ;  
Far on the future battle-heath  
His eye beheld the ranks of death :  
Thus the lone Seer, from mankind hurl'd,  
Shaped forth a disembodied world.  
One lingering sympathy of mind  
Still bound him to the mortal kind ;  
The only parent he could claim  
Of ancient Alpine lineage came.  
Late had he heard, in prophet's dream,  
The fatal Ben-Shie's boding scream ;  
Sounds, too, had come in midnight blast,  
Of charging steeds, careering fast  
Along Benharrow's shingly side,  
Where mortal horseman ne'er might ride ;  
The thunderbolt had split the pine, —  
All augur'd ill to Alpine's line.  
He girt his loins, and came to show  
The signals of impending woe,  
And now stood prompt to bless or ban,  
As bade the Chieftain of his clan.

## VIII.

'Twas all prepared ; — and from the rock,  
 A goat, the patriarch of the flock,  
 Before the kindling pile was laid,  
 And pierced by Roderick's ready blade.  
 Patient the sickening victim eyed  
 The life-blood ebb in crimson tide,  
 Down his clogg'd beard and shaggy limb,  
 Till darkness glazed his eyeballs dim.  
 The grisly priest, with murmuring prayer,  
 A slender crosslet form'd with care,  
 A cubit's length in measure due ;  
 The shaft and limbs were rods of yew,  
 Whose parents in Inch-Cailliach wave  
 Their shadows o'er Clan-Alpine's grave,  
 And, answering Lomond's breezes deep,  
 Soothe many a chieftain's endless sleep.  
 The Cross, thus form'd, he held on high,  
 With wasted hand, and haggard eye,  
 And strange and mingled feelings woke,  
 While his anathema he spoke :

## IX.

“ Woe to the clansman, who shall view  
 This symbol of sepulchral yew,  
 Forgetful that its branches grew  
 Where weep the heavens their holiest dew  
     On Alpine's dwelling low !  
 Deserter of his Chieftain's trust,  
 He ne'er shall mingle with their dust,  
 But, from his sires and kindred thrust,  
 Each clansman's execration just  
     Shall doom him wrath and woe.”  
 He paused ; — the word the vassals took,  
 With forward step and fiery look,  
 On high their naked brands they shook,  
 Their clattering targets wildly strook ;  
     And first in murmur low,  
 - Then, like the billow in his course,  
 That far to seaward finds his source,  
 And flings to shore his muster'd force,  
 Burst, with loud roar, their answer hoarse,  
     “ Woe to the traitor, woe ! ”

Ben-an's gray scalp the accents knew,  
 The joyous wolf from covert drew,  
 The exulting eagle scream'd afar, —  
 They knew the voice of Alpine's war.

## X.

The shout was hush'd on lake and fell,  
 The Monk resumed his mutter'd spell :  
 Dismal and low its accents came,  
 The while he scathed the Cross with flame ;  
 And the few words that reach'd the air,  
 Although the holiest name was there,  
 Had more of blasphemy than prayer.  
 But when he shook above the crowd  
 Its kindled points, he spoke aloud : —  
 " Woe to the wretch, who fails to rear  
 At this dread sign the ready spear !  
 For, as the flames this symbol sear,  
 His home, the refuge of his fear,

A kindred fate shall know ;  
 Far o'er its roof the volumed flame  
 Clan-Alpine's vengeance shall proclaim,  
 While maids and matrons on his name  
 Shall call down wretchedness and shame,  
 And infamy and woe."

Then rose the cry of females, shrill  
 As goss-hawk's whistle on the hill,  
 Denouncing misery and ill,  
 Mingled with childhood's babbling trill  
 Of curses stammer'd slow ;

Answering, with imprecation dread,  
 " Sunk be his home in embers red !  
 And cursed be the meanest shed  
 That e'er shall hide the houseless head,  
 We doom to want and woe ! "

A sharp and shrieking echo gave,  
 Coir-Uriskin, thy goblin cave !  
 And the gray pass where birches wave,  
 On Beala-nam-bo.

## XI.

Then deeper paused the priest anew,  
 And hard his laboring breath he drew,

While, with set teeth and clenched hand,  
And eyes that glow'd like fiery brand,  
He meditated curse more dread,  
And deadlier, on the clansman's head,  
Who, summon'd to his chieftain's aid,  
The signal saw and disobey'd.  
The crosslet's points of sparkling wood,  
He quench'd among the bubbling blood,  
And, as again the sign he rear'd,  
Hollow and hoarse his voice was heard :  
"When flits this Cross from man to man,  
Vich-Alpine's summons to his clan,  
Burst be the ear that fails to heed !  
Palsied the foot that shuns to speed !  
May ravens tear the careless eyes,  
Wolves make the coward heart their prize !  
As sinks that blood-stream in the earth,  
So may his heart's-blood drench his hearth !  
As dies in hissing gore the spark,  
Quench thou his light, Destruction dark !  
And be the grace to him denied,  
Bought by this sign to all beside !"  
He ceased ; no echo gave agen  
The murmur of the deep Amen.

## XII.

Then Roderick, with impatient look,  
From Brian's hand the symbol took :  
"Speed, Malise, speed !" he said, and gave  
The crosslet to his henchman brave.  
"The muster-place be Lanrick mead —  
Instant the time — speed, Malise, speed !"  
Like heath-bird, when the hawks pursue,  
A barge across Loch Katrine flew ;  
High stood the henchman on the prow,  
So rapidly the barge-men row,  
The bubbles, where they launch'd the boat,  
Were all unbroken and afloat,  
Dancing in foam and ripple still,  
When it had near'd the mainland hill ;  
And from the silver beach's side  
Still was the prow three fathom wide,



When lightly bounded to the land  
The messenger of blood and brand.

## XIII.

Speed, Malise, speed ! the dun deer's hide  
On fleeter foot was never tied.  
Speed, Malise, speed ! such cause of haste  
Thine active sinews never braced.  
Bend 'gainst the steepy hill thy breast,  
Burst down like torrent from its crest ;  
With short and springing footstep pass  
The trembling bog and false morass ;  
Across the brook like roebuck bound,  
And thread the brake like questing hound ;  
The crag is high, the scaur is deep,  
Yet shrink not from the desperate leap :  
Parch'd are thy burning lips and brow,  
Yet by the fountain pause not now ;  
Herald of battle, fate, and fear,  
Stretch onward in thy fleet career !  
The wounded hind thou track'st not now,  
Pursuest not maid through greenwood bough,  
Nor pliest thou now thy flying pace,  
With rivals in the mountain race ;  
But danger, death, and warrior deed,  
Are in thy course — speed, Malise, speed !

## XIV.

Fast as the fatal symbol flies,  
In arms the huts and hamlets rise ;  
From winding glen, from upland brown,  
They pour'd each hardy tenant down.  
Nor slack'd the messenger his pace ;  
He show'd the sign, he named the place,  
And, pressing forward like the wind,  
Left clamor and surprise behind.  
The fisherman forsook the strand,  
The swarthy smith took dirk and brand ;  
With changed cheer, the mower blithe  
Left in the half-cut swathe the scythe ;  
The herds without a keeper stray'd,  
The plough was in mid-furrow staid,

The falc'ner toss'd his hawk away,  
The hunter left the stag at bay;  
Prompt at the signal of alarms,  
Each son of Alpine rush'd to arms;  
So swept the tumult and affray  
Along the margin of Achray.  
Alas, thou lovely lake! that e'er  
Thy banks should echo sounds of fear!  
The rocks, the bosky thickets, sleep  
So stilly on thy bosom deep,  
The lark's blithe carol, from the cloud,  
Seems for the scene too gaily loud.

## XV.

Speed, Malise, speed! The lake is past,  
Duncraggan's huts appear at last,  
And peep, like moss-grown rocks, half seen,  
Half hidden in the copse so green;  
There mayst thou rest, thy labor done,  
Their Lord shall speed the signal on. —  
As stoops the hawk upon his prey,  
The henchman shot him down the way.  
— What woful accents load the gale?  
The funeral yell, the female wail!  
A gallant hunter's sport is o'er,  
A valiant warrior fights no more.  
Who, in the battle or the chase,  
At Roderick's side shall fill his place! —  
Within the hall, where torches' ray  
Supplies the excluded beams of day,  
Lies Duncan on his lowly bier,  
And o'er him streams his widow's tear.  
His stripling son stands mournful by,  
His youngest weeps, but knows not why;  
The village maids and matrons round  
The dismal coronach resound.

## XVI.

## CORONACH.

He is gone on the mountain,  
He is lost to the forest,  
Like a summer-dried fountain,  
When our need was the sorest.

The font, reappearing,  
 From the rain-drops shall borrow,  
 But to us comes no cheering,  
 To Duncan no morrow !  
 The hand of the reaper  
 Takes the ears that are hoary,  
 But the voice of the weeper  
 Wails manhood in glory.  
 The autumn winds rushing  
 Waft the leaves that are searest,  
 But our flower was in flushing,  
 When blighting was nearest.

Fleet foot on the correi,<sup>1</sup>  
 Sage counsel in cumber,  
 Red hand in the foray,  
 How sound is thy slumber !  
 Like the dew on the mountain,  
 Like the foam on the river,  
 Like the bubble on the fountain  
 Thou art gone, and for ever !

## XVII.

See Stumah,<sup>2</sup> who, the bier beside,  
 His master's corpse with wonder eyed,  
 Poor Stumah ! whom his least halloo  
 Could send like lightning o'er the dew,  
 Bristles his crest, and points his ears,  
 As if some stranger step he hears.  
 'Tis not a mourner's muffled tread,  
 Who comes to sorrow o'er the dead,  
 But headlong haste, or deadly fear,  
 Urge the precipitate career.  
 All stand aghast : — unheeding all,  
 The henchman bursts into the hall ;  
 Before the dead man's bier he stood ;  
 Held forth the Cross besmear'd with blood ;  
 " The muster-place is Lanrick mead ;  
 Speed forth the signal ! clansmen, speed ! "

<sup>1</sup> Or *corri*, the hollow side of the hill, where game usually lies.

<sup>2</sup> *Faithful*, the name of a dog.

## XVIII.

Angus, the heir of Duncan's line,  
Sprung forth and seized the fatal sign.  
In haste the stripling to his side  
His father's dirk and broadsword tied ;  
But when he saw his mother's eye  
Watch him in speechless agony,  
Back to her open'd arms he flew,  
Press'd on her lips a fond adieu —  
"Alas !" she sobb'd, — "and yet be gone,  
And speed thee forth, like Duncan's son !"  
One look he cast upon the bier,  
Dash'd from his eye the gathering tear,  
Breathed deep to clear his laboring breast,  
And toss'd aloft his bonnet crest,  
Then, like the high-bred colt, when, freed,  
First he essays his fire and speed,  
He vanish'd, and o'er moor and moss  
Sped forward with the Fiery Cross.  
Suspended was the widow's tear,  
While yet his footsteps she could hear ;  
And when she mark'd the henchman's eye  
Wet with unwonted sympathy,  
"Kinsman," she said, "his race is run,  
That should have sped thine errand on ;  
The oak has fall'n, — the sapling bough  
Is all Duncraggan's shelter now.  
Yet trust I well, his duty done,  
The orphan's God will guard my son. —  
And you, in many a danger true,  
At Duncan's hest your blades that drew,  
To arms, and guard that orphan's head !  
Let babes and women wail the dead."  
Then weapon-clang, and martial call,  
Resounded through the funeral hall,  
While from the walls the attendant band  
Snatch'd sword and targe, with hurried hand ;  
And short and flitting energy  
Glanced from the mourner's sunken eye,  
As if the sounds to warrior dear  
Might rouse her Duncan from his bier.  
But faded soon that borrow'd force ;  
Grief claim'd his right, and tears their course.

## XIX.

Benledi saw the Cross of Fire,  
It glanced like lightning up Strath-Ire.  
O'er dale and hill the summons flew,  
Nor rest nor pause young Angus knew;  
The tear that gather'd in his eye  
He left the mountain-breeze to dry;  
Until, where Teith's young waters roll,  
Betwixt him and a wooded knoll,  
That graced the sable strath with green,  
The chapel of Saint Bride was seen.  
Swoln was the stream, remote the bridge,  
But Angus paused not on the edge;  
Though the dark waves danced dizzily,  
Though reel'd his sympathetic eye,  
He dash'd amid the torrent's roar:  
His right hand high the crosslet bore,  
His left the pole-axe grasp'd, to guide  
And stay his footing in the tide.  
He stumbled twice — the foam splash'd high,  
With hoarser swell the stream raced by;  
And had he fall'n, — for ever there,  
Farewell Duncraggan's orphan heir!  
But still, as if in parting life,  
Firmer he grasp'd the Cross of strife,  
Until the opposing bank he gain'd,  
And up the chapel pathway strain'd.

## XX.

A blithesome rout, that morning tide,  
Had sought the chapel of St. Bride.  
Her troth Tombea's Mary gave  
To Norman, heir of Armandave,  
And, issuing from the Gothic arch,  
The bridal now resumed their march.  
In rude, but glad procession, came  
Bonneted sire and coif-clad dame;  
And plaided youth, with jest and jeer,  
Which snooded maiden would not hear:  
And children, that, unwitting why,  
Lent the gay shout their shrilly cry;  
And minstrels, that in measures vied  
Before the young and bonny bride,

Whose downcast eye and cheek disclose  
The tear and blush of morning rose.  
With virgin step, and bashful hand,  
She held the 'kerchief's snowy band;  
The gallant bridegroom, by her side,  
Beheld his prize with victor's pride,  
And the glad mother in her ear  
Was closely whispering word of cheer.

## XXI.

Who meets them at the churchyard gate?  
The messenger of fear and fate!  
Haste in his hurried accent lies,  
And grief is swimming in his eyes.  
All dripping from the recent flood,  
Panting and travel-soil'd he stood,  
The fatal sign of fire and sword  
Held forth, and spoke the appointed word:  
"The muster-place is Lanrick mead;  
Speed forth the signal! Norman, speed!"  
And must he change so soon the hand,  
Just link'd to his by holy band,  
For the fell Cross of blood and brand?  
And must the day, so blithe that rose,  
And promised rapture in the close,  
Before its setting hour, divide  
The bridegroom from the plighted bride?  
O fatal doom! — it must! it must!  
Clan-Alpine's cause, her Chieftain's trust,  
Her summons dread, brook no delay;  
Stretch to the race — away! away!

## XXII.

Yet slow he laid his plaid aside,  
And, lingering, eyed his lovely bride,  
Until he saw the starting tear  
Speak woe he might not stop to cheer;  
Then, trusting not a second look,  
In haste he sped him up the brook,  
Nor backward glanced, till on the heath  
Where Lubnaig's lake supplies the Teith.  
— What in the racer's bosom stirr'd?  
The sickening pang of hope deferr'd,

And memory, with a torturing train  
 Of all his morning visions vain.  
 Mingled with love's impatience, came  
 The manly thirst for martial fame;  
 The stormy joy of mountaineers,  
 Ere yet they rush upon the spears;  
 And zeal for Clan and Chieftain burning,  
 And hope, from well-fought field returning,  
 With war's red honors on his crest,  
 To clasp his Mary to his breast.  
 Stung by such thoughts, o'er bank and brae,  
 Like fire from flint he glanced away,  
 While high resolve, and feeling strong,  
 Burst into voluntary song.

## XXIII.

## SONG.

The heath this night must be my bed,  
 The bracken <sup>1</sup> curtain for my head,  
 My lullaby the warder's tread,  
     Far, far, from love and thee, Mary;  
 To-morrow eve, more stilly laid,  
 My couch may be my bloody plaid,  
 My vesper song, thy wail, sweet maid!  
     It will not waken me, Mary!

I may not, dare not, fancy now  
 The grief that clouds thy lovely brow,  
 I dare not think upon thy vow,

    And all it promised me, Mary.  
 No fond regret must Norman know;  
 When bursts Clan-Alpine on the foe,  
 His heart must be like bended bow,  
     His foot like arrow free, Mary.

A time will come with feeling fraught,  
 For, if I fall in battle fought,  
 Thy hapless lover's dying thought  
     Shall be a thought on thee, Mary.  
 And if return'd from conquer'd foes,  
 How blithely will the evening close,  
 How sweet the linnet sing repose,  
     To my young bride and me, Mary!

<sup>1</sup> *Bracken*, fern.



## XXIV.

Not faster o'er thy heathery braes,  
Balquidder, speeds the midnight blaze,  
Rushing, in conflagration strong,  
Thy deep ravines and dells along,  
Wrapping thy cliffs in purple glow,  
And reddening the dark lakes below ;  
Nor faster speeds it, nor so far,  
As o'er thy heaths the voice of war.  
The signal roused to martial coil,  
The sullen margin of Loch Voil,  
Waked still Loch Doine, and to the source  
Alarm'd, Balvaig, thy swampy course ;  
Thence southward turn'd its rapid road  
Adown Strath-Gartney's valley broad,  
Till rose in arms each man might claim  
A portion in Clan-Alpine's name,  
From the gray sire, whose trembling hand  
Could hardly buckle on his brand,  
To the raw boy, whose shaft and bow  
Were yet scarce terror to the crow.  
Each valley, each sequester'd glen,  
Muster'd its little horde of men,  
That met as torrents from the height  
In Highland dales their streams unite,  
Still gathering, as they pour along,  
A voice more loud, a tide more strong,  
Till at the rendezvous they stood  
By hundreds prompt for blows and blood,  
Each train'd to arms since life began,  
Owning no tie but to his clan,  
No oath, but by his chieftain's hand,  
No law, but Roderick Dhu's command.

## XXV.

That summer morn had Roderick Dhu  
Survey'd the skirts of Benvenue,  
And sent his scouts o'er hill and heath,  
To view the frontiers of Menteith.  
All backward came with news of truce ;  
Still lay each martial Græme and Bruce,  
In Rednock courts no horsemen wait,  
No banner waved on Cardross gate,

On Duchray's towers no beacon shone,  
Nor scared the herons from Loch Con ;  
All seem'd at peace. — Now wot ye why  
The Chieftain, with such anxious eye,  
Ere to the muster he repair,  
This western frontier scann'd with care ? —  
In Benvenue's most darksome cleft,  
A fair, though cruel, pledge was left ;  
For Douglas, to his promise true,  
That morning from the isle withdrew,  
And in a deep sequester'd dell  
Had sought a low and lonely cell.  
By many a bard, in Celtic tongue,  
Has Coir-nan-Uriskin been sung ;  
A softer name the Saxons gave,  
And called the grot the Goblin-cave.

## XXVI.

It was a wild and strange retreat,  
As e'er was trod by outlaw's feet.  
The dell, upon the mountain's crest,  
Yawn'd like a gash on warrior's breast ;  
Its trench had staid full many a rock,  
Hurl'd by primeval earthquake shock  
From Benvenue's gray summit wild,  
And here, in random ruin piled,  
They frown'd incumbent o'er the spot,  
And form'd the rugged silvan grot.  
The oak and birch, with mingled shade,  
At noontide there a twilight made,  
Unless when short and sudden shone  
Some straggling beam on cliff or stone,  
With such a glimpse as prophet's eye  
Gains on thy depth, Futurity.  
No murmur waked the solemn still,  
Save tinkling of a fountain rill ;  
But when the wind chafed with the lake,  
A sullen sound would upward break,  
With dashing hollow voice, that spoke  
The incessant war of wave and rock.  
Suspended cliffs, with hideous sway,  
Seem'd nodding o'er the cavern gray.  
From such a den the wolf had sprung,

In such the wild-cat leaves her young ;  
Yet Douglas and his daughter fair  
Sought for a space their safety there.  
Gray Superstition's whisper dread  
Debarr'd the spot to vulgar tread ;  
For there, she said, did fays resort,  
And satyrs hold their silvan court,  
By moonlight tread their mystic maze,  
And blast the rash beholder's gaze.

## XXVII.

Now eve, with western shadows long,  
Floated on Katrine bright and strong,  
When Roderick, with a chosen few,  
Repass'd the heights of Benvenue.  
Above the Goblin-cave they go,  
Through the wild pass of Beal-nam-bo ;  
The prompt retainers speed before,  
To launch the shallop from the shore,  
For 'cross Loch Katrine lies his way  
To view the passes of Achray,  
And place his clansmen in array.  
Yet lags the chief in musing mind,  
Unwonted sight, his men behind.  
A single page, to bear his sword,  
Alone attended on his lord ;  
The rest their way through thickets break,  
And soon await him by the lake.  
It was a fair and gallant sight,  
To view them from the neighboring height,  
By the low-levell'd sunbeam's light !  
For strength and stature, from the clan  
Each warrior was a chosen man,  
As even afar might well be seen,  
By their proud step and martial mien.  
Their feathers dance, their tartans float,  
Their targets gleam, as by the boat  
A wild and warlike group they stand,  
That well became such mountain-strand.

## XXVIII.

Their Chief, with step reluctant, still  
Was lingering on the craggy hill,

Hard by where turn'd apart the road  
 To Douglas's obscure abode.  
 It was but with that dawning morn  
 That Roderick Dhu had proudly sworn  
 To drown his love in war's wild roar,  
 Nor think of Ellen Douglas more;  
 But he who stems a stream with sand,  
 And fetters flame with flaxen band,  
 Has yet a harder task to prove —  
 By firm resolve to conquer love!  
 Eve finds the Chief, like restless ghost,  
 Still hovering near his treasure lost;  
 For though his haughty heart deny  
 A parting meeting to his eye,  
 Still fondly strains his anxious ear,  
 The accents of her voice to hear,  
 And inly did he curse the breeze  
 That waked to sound the rustling trees.  
 But hark! what mingles in the strain?  
 It is the harp of Allan-bane,  
 That wakes its measure slow and high,  
 Attuned to sacred minstrelsy.  
 What melting voice attends the strings?  
 'Tis Ellen, or an angel, sings.

## XXIX.

## HYMN TO THE VIRGIN.

*Ave Maria!* maiden mild!  
 Listen to a maiden's prayer!  
 Thou canst hear though from the wild,  
 Thou canst save amid despair.  
 Safe may we sleep beneath thy care,  
 Though banish'd, outcast, and reviled —  
 Maiden! hear a maiden's prayer;  
 Mother; hear a suppliant child!  
*Ave Maria!*
*Ave Maria!* undefiled!  
 The flinty couch we now must share  
 Shall seem with down of eider piled,  
 If thy protection hover there.  
 The murky cavern's heavy air  
 Shall breathe of balm if thou hast smiled;

Then, Maiden! hear a maiden's prayer,  
 Mother, list a suppliant child!

*Ave Maria!*

*Ave Maria!* Stainless styled!

Foul demons of the earth and air,  
 From this their wonted haunt exiled,  
 Shall flee before thy presence fair.

We bow us to our lot of care,  
 Beneath thy guidance reconciled;  
 Hear for a maid a maiden's prayer,  
 And for a father hear a child!

*Ave Maria!*

xxx.

Died on the harp the closing hymn —  
 Unmoved in attitude and limb,  
 As list'ning still, Clan-Alpine's lord  
 Stood leaning on his heavy sword,  
 Until the page, with humble sign,  
 Twice pointed to the sun's decline.  
 Then while his plaid he round him cast,  
 "It is the last time — 'tis the last,"  
 He mutter'd thrice, — "the last time e'er  
 That angel-voice shall Roderick hear!"  
 It was a goading thought — his stride  
 Hied hastier down the mountain-side;  
 Sullen he flung him in the boat,  
 An instant 'cross the lake it shot.  
 They landed in that silvery bay,  
 And eastward held their hasty way,  
 Till, with the latest beams of light,  
 The band arrived on Lanrick height,  
 Where muster'd, in the vale below,  
 Clan-Alpine's men in martial show.

xxxI.

A various scene the clansmen made,  
 Some sate, some stood, some slowly stray'd;  
 But most, with mantles folded round,  
 Were couch'd to rest upon the ground,  
 Scarce to be known by curious eye,  
 From the deep heather where they lie,  
 So well was match'd the tartan screen

With heath-bell dark and brackens green ;  
 Unless where, here and there, a blade,  
 Or lance's point, a glimmer made,  
 Like glow-worm twinkling through the shade.  
 But when, advancing through the gloom,  
 They saw the Chieftain's eagle plume,  
 Their shout of welcome, shrill and wide,  
 Shook the steep mountain's steady side.  
 Thrice it arose, and lake and fell  
 Three times return'd the martial yell ;  
 It died upon Bochastle's plain,  
 And Silence claim'd her evening reign.

## CANTO FOURTH.

## THE PROPHECY.

## I.

"THE rose is fairest when 'tis budding new,  
 And hope is brightest when it dawns from fears :  
 The rose is sweetest wash'd with morning dew,  
 And love is loveliest when embalm'd in tears.  
 O wilding rose, whom fancy thus endears,  
 I bid your blossoms in my bonnet wave,  
 Emblem of hope and love through future years !" —  
 Thus spoke young Norman, heir of Armandave,  
 What time the sun arose on Vennachar's broad wave.

## II.

Such fond conceit, half said, half sung,  
 Love prompted to the bridegroom's tongue.  
 All while he stripp'd the wild-rose spray,  
 His axe and bow beside him lay,  
 For on a pass 'twixt lake and wood,  
 A wakeful sentinel he stood.  
 Hark ! — on the rock a footstep rung,  
 And instant to his arms he sprung.  
 "Stand, or thou diest ! — What, Malise ? — soon  
 Art thou return'd from Braes of Doune.  
 By thy keen step and glance I know,  
 Thou bring'st us tidings of the foe." —

(For while the Fiery Cross hied on,  
 On distant scout had Malise gone.)  
 "Where sleeps the Chief?" the henchman said.  
 "Apart, in yonder misty glade;  
 To his lone couch I'll be your guide." —  
 Then call'd a slumberer by his side,  
 And stirr'd him with his slacken'd bow —  
 "Up, up, Glentarkin! rouse thee, ho!  
 We seek the Chieftain; on the track,  
 Keep eagle watch till I come back."

## III.

Together up the pass they sped:  
 "What of the foemen?" Norman said. —  
 "Varying reports from near and far;  
 This certain, — that a band of war  
 Has for two days been ready boune,  
 At prompt command, to march from Doune;  
 King James, the while, with princely powers,  
 Holds revelry in Stirling towers.  
 Soon will this dark and gathering cloud  
 Speak on our glens in thunder loud.  
 Inured to bide such bitter bout,  
 The warrior's plaid may bear it out;  
 But, Norman, how wilt thou provide  
 A shelter for thy bonny bride?" —  
 "What! know ye not that Roderick's care  
 To the lone isle hath caused repair  
 Each maid and matron of the clan,  
 And every child and aged man  
 Unfit for arms; and given his charge,  
 Nor skiff nor shallop, boat nor barge,  
 Upon these lakes shall float at large,  
 But all beside the islet moor,  
 That such dear pledge may rest secure?" —

## IV.

"'Tis well advised — the Chieftain's plan  
 Bespeaks the father of his clan.  
 But wherefore sleeps Sir Roderick Dhu  
 Apart from all his followers true?" —  
 "It is, because last evening-tide  
 Brian an augury hath tried,



Of that dread kind which must not be  
Unless in dread extremity,  
The Taghairm call'd; by which, afar,  
Our sires foresaw the events of war.  
Duncraggan's milk-white bull they slew."

MALISE.

"Ah! well the gallant brute I knew.  
The choicest of the prey we had,  
When swept our merry-men Gallangad.  
His hide was snow, his horns were dark,  
His red eye glow'd like fiery spark;  
So fierce, so tameless, and so fleet,  
Sore did he cumber our retreat,  
And kept our stoutest kernes in awe,  
Even at the pass of Beal 'maha.  
But steep and flinty was the road,  
And sharp the hurrying pikeman's goad,  
And when we came to Dennan's Row,  
A child might scatheless stroke his brow." —

V.

NORMAN.

"That bull was slain: his reeking hide  
They stretch'd the cataract beside,  
Whose waters their wild tumult toss  
Adown the black and craggy boss  
Of that huge cliff, whose ample verge  
Tradition calls the Hero's Targe.  
Couch'd on a shelve beneath its brink,  
Close where the thundering torrents sink,  
Rocking beneath their headlong sway,  
And drizzled by the ceaseless spray,  
Midst groan of rock, and roar of stream,  
The wizard waits prophetic dream.  
Nor distant rests the Chief; — but hush!  
See, gliding slow through mist and bush,  
The hermit gains yon rock, and stands  
To gaze upon our slumbering bands.  
Seems he not, Malise, like a ghost,  
That hovers o'er a slaughter'd host?  
Or raven on the blasted oak,

That, watching while the deer is broke,<sup>1</sup>  
His morsel claims with sullen croak ?”

## MALISE.

— “Peace ! peace ! to other than to me,  
Thy words were evil augury ;  
But still I hold Sir Roderick’s blade  
Clan-Alpine’s omen and her aid,  
Not aught that, glean’d from heaven or hell,  
Yon fiend-begotten Monk can tell.  
The Chieftain joins him, see — and now,  
Together they descend the brow.”

## VI.

And, as they came, with Alpine’s Lord  
The Hermit Monk held solemn word : —  
“Roderick ! it is a fearful strife,  
For man endow’d with mortal life,  
Whose shroud of sentient clay can still  
Feel feverish pang and fainting chill,  
Whose eye can stare in stony trance,  
Whose hair can rouse like warrior’s lance, —  
’Tis hard for such to view, unfurl’d,  
The curtain of the future world.  
Yet, witness every quaking limb,  
My sunken pulse, my eyeballs dim,  
My soul with harrowing anguish torn,  
This for my Chieftain have I borne ! —  
The shapes that sought my fearful couch,  
A human tongue may ne’er avouch ;  
No mortal man, — save he, who, bred  
Between the living and the dead,  
Is gifted beyond nature’s law, —  
Had e’er survived to say he saw.  
At length the fateful answer came,  
In characters of living flame !  
Not spoke in word, nor blazed in scroll,  
But borne and branded on my soul ; —  
WHICH SPILLS THE FOREMOST FOEMAN’S LIFE,  
THAT PARTY CONQUERS IN THE STRIFE.” —

<sup>1</sup> Quartered.

## VII.

"Thanks, Brian, for thy zeal and care!  
 Good is thine augury, and fair.  
 Clan-Alpine ne'er in battle stood,  
 But first our broadswords tasted blood.  
 A surer victim still I know,  
 Self-offer'd to the auspicious blow:  
 A spy has sought my land this morn, —  
 No eve shall witness his return!  
 My followers guard each pass's mouth,  
 To east, to westward, and to south;  
 Red Murdoch, bribed to be his guide,  
 Has charge to lead his steps aside,  
 Till, in deep path or dingle brown,  
 He light on those shall bring him down.  
 — But see, who comes his news to show!  
 Malise! what tidings of the foe?" —

## VIII.

"At Doune, o'er many a spear and glaive  
 Two Barons proud their banners wave.  
 I saw the Moray's silver star,  
 And mark'd the sable pale of Mar." —  
 "By Alpine's soul, high tidings those!  
 I love to hear of worthy foes.  
 When move they on?" — "To-morrow's noon  
 Will see them here for battle boune." —<sup>1</sup>  
 "Then shall it see a meeting stern! —  
 But, for the place — say, couldst thou learn  
 Nought of the friendly clans of Earn?  
 Strengthened by them, we well might bide  
 The battle on Benledi's side.  
 Thou couldst not? — well! Clan-Alpine's men  
 Shall man the Trosachs' shaggy glen;  
 Within Loch Katrine's gorge we'll fight,  
 All in our maids' and matrons' sight,  
 Each for his hearth and household fire,  
 Father for child, and son for sire, —  
 Lover for maid beloved! — But why —  
 Is it the breeze affects mine eye?

<sup>1</sup> *Boune* or *bown* — ready, prepared.

Or dost thou come, ill-omen'd tear !  
A messenger of doubt or fear ?  
No ! sooner may the Saxon lance  
Unfix Benledi from his stance,  
Than doubt or terror can pierce through  
The unyielding heart of Roderick Dhu !  
'Tis stubborn as his trusty targe. —  
Each to his post — all know their charge.”  
The pibroch sounds, the bands advance,  
The broadswords gleam, the banners dance,  
Obedient to the Chieftain's glance.  
— I turn me from the martial roar,  
And seek Coir-Uriskin once more.

## IX.

Where is the Douglas ? — he is gone ;  
And Ellen sits on the gray stone  
Fast by the cave, and makes her moan ;  
While vainly Allan's words of cheer  
Are pour'd on her unheeding ear. —  
“ He will return — Dear lady, trust ! —  
With joy return ; — he will — he must.  
Well was it time to seek, afar,  
Some refuge from impending war,  
When e'en Clan-Alpine's rugged swarm  
Are cow'd by the approaching storm.  
I saw their boats with many a light,  
Floating the livelong yesternight,  
Shifting like flashes darted forth  
By the red streamers of the north ;  
I mark'd at morn how close they ride,  
Thick moor'd by the lone islet's side,  
Like wild ducks couching in the fen,  
When stoops the hawk upon the glen.  
Since this rude race dare not abide  
The peril on the mainland side,  
Shall not thy noble father's care  
Some safe retreat for thee prepare ? ” —

## X.

## ELLEN.

“ No, Allan, no ! Pretext so kind  
My wakeful terrors could not blind.

When in such tender tone, yet grave,  
 Douglas a parting blessing gave,  
 The tear that glisten'd in his eye  
 Drown'd not his purpose fix'd on high.  
 My soul, though feminine and weak,  
 Can image his ; e'en as the lake,  
 Itself disturb'd by slightest stroke,  
 Reflects the invulnerable rock.  
 He hears report of battle rife,  
 He deems himself the cause of strife.  
 I saw him redden, when the theme  
 Turn'd, Allan, on thine idle dream  
 Of Malcolm Græme in fetters bound,  
 Which I, thou saidst, about him wound.  
 Think'st thou he trow'd thine omen aught ?  
 Oh no ! 'twas apprehensive thought  
 For the kind youth, — for Roderick too —  
 (Let me be just) that friend so true ;  
 In danger both, and in our cause !  
 Minstrel, the Douglas dare not pause.  
 Why else that solemn warning given,  
 ' If not on earth, we meet in heaven ! '  
 Why else, to Cambus-kenneth's fane,  
 If eve return him not again,  
 Am I to hie, and make me known ?  
 Alas ! he goes to Scotland's throne,  
 Buys his friend's safety with his own ; —  
 He goes to do — what I had done,  
 Had Douglas' daughter been his son ! ”

## XI.

“ Nay, lovely Ellen ! — dearest, nay !  
 If aught should his return delay,  
 He only named yon holy fane  
 As fitting place to meet again.  
 Be sure he's safe ; and for the Græme, —  
 Heaven's blessing on his gallant name ! —  
 My vision'd sight may yet prove true,  
 Nor bode of ill to him or you.  
 When did my gifted dream beguile ?  
 Think of the stranger at the isle,  
 And think upon the harpings slow,  
 That presaged this approaching woe !

Sooth was my prophecy of fear ;  
 Believe it when it augurs cheer.  
 Would we had left this dismal spot !  
 Ill luck still haunts a fairy grot.  
 Of such a wondrous tale I know —  
 Dear lady, change that look of woe,  
 My harp was wont thy grief to cheer.”

ELLEN.

“Well, be it as thou wilt ; I hear,  
 But cannot stop the bursting tear.”  
 The Minstrel tried his simple art,  
 But distant far was Ellen’s heart.

XII.

BALLAD.

ALICE BRAND.

Merry it is in the good greenwood,  
 When the mavis <sup>1</sup> and merle <sup>2</sup> are singing,  
 When the deer sweeps by, and the hounds are in cry,  
 And the hunter’s horn is ringing.

“O Alice Brand, my native land  
 Is lost for love of you ;  
 And we must hold by wood and wold,  
 As outlaws wont to do.

“O Alice, ’twas all for thy locks so bright,  
 And ’twas all for thine eyes so blue,  
 That on the night of our luckless flight,  
 Thy brother bold I slew.

“Now must I teach to hew the beech,  
 The hand that held the glaive,  
 For leaves to spread our lowly bed,  
 And stakes to fence our cave.

“And for vest of pall, thy fingers small,  
 That wont on harp to stray,  
 A cloak must shear from the slaughter’d deer,  
 To keep the cold away.” —

<sup>1</sup> Thrush.

<sup>2</sup> Blackbird.

"O Richard! if my brother died,  
'Twas but a fatal chance;  
For darkling was the battle tried,  
And fortune sped the lance.

"If pall and vair no more I wear,  
Nor thou the crimson sheen,  
As warm, we'll say, is the russet gray,  
As gay the forest-green.

"And, Richard, if our lot be hard,  
And lost thy native land,  
Still Alice has her own Richard,  
And he his Alice Brand."

, XIII.

BALLAD CONTINUED.

'Tis merry, 'tis merry, in good greenwood,  
So blithe Lady Alice is singing;  
On the beech's pride, and oak's brown side,  
Lord Richard's axe is ringing.

Up spoke the moody Elfin King,  
Who wonn'd within the hill, —  
Like wind in the porch of a ruin'd church,  
His voice was ghostly shrill.

"Why sounds yon stroke on beech and oak,  
Our moonlight circle's screen?  
Or who comes here to chase the deer,  
Beloved of our Elfin Queen?  
Or who may dare on wold to wear  
The fairies' fatal green?"

"Up, Urgan, up! to yon mortal hie,  
For thou wert christen'd man;  
For cross or sign thou wilt not fly,  
For mutter'd word or ban.

"Lay on him the curse of the wither'd heart,  
The curse of the sleepless eye;  
Till he wish and pray that his life would part,  
Nor yet find leave to die."



## XIV.

## BALLAD CONTINUED.

'Tis merry, 'tis merry, in good greenwood,  
Though the birds have still'd their singing;  
The evening blaze doth Alice raise,  
And Richard is fagots bringing.

Up Urgan starts, that hideous dwarf,  
Before Lord Richard stands,  
And, as he cross'd and bless'd himself,  
"I fear not sign," quoth the grisly elf,  
"That is made with bloody hands."

But out then spoke she, Alice Brand,  
That woman void of fear, —  
"And if there's blood upon his hand,  
'Tis but the blood of deer." —

"Now loud thou liest, thou bold of mood!  
It cleaves unto his hand,  
The stain of thine own kindly blood,  
The blood of Ethert Brand."

Then forward stepp'd she, Alice Brand,  
And made the holy sign, —  
"And if there's blood on Richard's hand,  
A spotless hand is mine.

"And I conjure thee, Demon elf,  
By Him whom Demons fear,  
To show us whence thou art thyself,  
And what thine errand here?"

## XV.

## BALLAD CONTINUED.

"'Tis merry, 'tis merry, in Fairy-land,  
When fairy birds are singing,  
When the court doth ride by their monarch's side,  
With bit and bridle ringing:

"And gaily shines the Fairy-land —  
But all is glistening show,  
Like the idle gleam that December's beam  
Can dart on ice and snow.

“And fading, like that varied gleam,  
Is our inconstant shape,  
Who now like knight and lady seem,  
And now like dwarf and ape.

“It was between the night and day,  
When the Fairy King has power,  
That I sunk down in a sinful fray,  
And, ’twixt life and death, was snatch’d away  
To the joyless Elfin bower.

“But wist I of a woman bold,  
Who thrice my brow durst sign,  
I might regain my mortal mould,  
As fair a form as thine.”

She cross’d him once — she cross’d him twice —  
That lady was so brave ;  
The fouler grew his goblin hue,  
The darker grew the cave.

She cross’d him thrice, that lady bold ;  
He rose beneath her hand  
The fairest knight on Scottish mould,  
Her brother, Ethert Brand !

Merry it is in good greenwood,  
When the mavis and merle are singing,  
But merrier were they in Dunfermline gray,  
When all the bells were ringing.

## XVI.

Just as the minstrel sounds were staid,  
A stranger climb’d the steepy glade ;  
His martial step, his stately mien,  
His hunting suit of Lincoln green,  
His eagle glance, remembrance claims —  
’Tis Snowdoun’s Knight, ’tis James Fitz-James.  
Ellen beheld as in a dream,  
Then, starting, scarce suppress’d a scream :  
“O stranger ! in such hour of fear,  
What evil hap has brought thee here ?” —  
“An evil hap how can it be,  
That bids me look again on thee ?

By promise bound, my former guide  
Met me betimes this morning tide,  
And marshall'd, over bank and bourne,  
The happy path of my return." —  
"The happy path! — what! said he nought  
Of war, of battle to be fought,  
Of guarded pass?" — "No, by my faith!  
Nor saw I aught could augur scathe." —  
"O haste thee, Allan, to the kern,  
— Yonder his tartans I discern;  
Learn thou his purpose, and conjure  
That he will guide the stranger sure! —  
What prompted thee, unhappy man?  
The meanest serf in Roderick's clan  
Had not been bribed by love or fear,  
Unknown to him to guide thee here." —

## XVII.

"Sweet Ellen, dear my life must be,  
Since it is worthy care from thee;  
Yet life I hold but idle breath,  
When love or honor's weigh'd with death.  
Then let me profit by my chance,  
And speak my purpose bold at once.  
I come to bear thee from a wild,  
Where ne'er before such blossom smiled;  
By this soft hand to lead thee far  
From frantic scenes of feud and war.  
Near Bochastle my horses wait;  
They bear us soon to Stirling gate.  
I'll place thee in a lovely bower,  
I'll guard thee like a tender flower" —  
"O! hush, Sir Knight! 'twere female art,  
To say I do not read thy heart;  
Too much, before, my selfish ear  
Was idly soothed my praise to hear.  
That fatal bait hath lured thee back,  
In deathful hour, o'er dangerous track;  
And how, O how, can I atone  
The wreck my vanity brought on! —  
One way remains — I'll tell him all —  
Yes! struggling bosom, forth it shall!  
Thou, whose light folly bears the blame,

Buy thine own pardon with thy shame !  
 But first — my father is a man  
 Outlaw'd and exil'd, under ban ;  
 The price of blood is on his head,  
 With me 'twere infamy to wed. —  
 Still would'st thou speak ? — then hear the truth !  
 Fitz-James, there is a noble youth, —  
 If yet he is ! — exposed for me  
 And mine to dread extremity —  
 Thou hast the secret of my heart ;  
 Forgive, be generous, and depart !”

## XVIII.

Fitz-James knew every wily train  
 A lady's fickle heart to gain,  
 But here he knew and felt them vain.  
 There shot no glance from Ellen's eye,  
 To give her steadfast speech the lie ;  
 In maiden confidence she stood,  
 Though mantled in her cheek the blood,  
 And told her love with such a sigh  
 Of deep and hopeless agony,  
 As death had seal'd her Malcolm's doom,  
 And she sat sorrowing on his tomb.  
 Hope vanish'd from Fitz-James's eye,  
 But not with hope fled sympathy.  
 He proffer'd to attend her side,  
 As brother would a sister guide. —  
 “ O ! little know'st thou Roderick's heart !  
 Safer for both we go apart.  
 O haste thee, and from Allan learn,  
 If thou mayst trust yon wily kern.”  
 With hand upon his forehead laid,  
 The conflict of his mind to shade,  
 A parting step or two he made ;  
 Then, as some thought had cross'd his brain,  
 He paus'd, and turn'd, and came again.

## XIX.

“ Hear, lady, yet, a parting word ! —  
 It chanced in fight that my poor sword  
 Preserved the life of Scotland's lord.  
 This ring the grateful Monarch gave,

And bade, when I had boon to crave,  
To bring it back, and boldly claim  
The recompense that I would name.  
Ellen, I am no courtly lord,  
But one who lives by lance and sword,  
Whose castle is his helm and shield,  
His lordship the embattled field.  
What from a prince can I demand,  
Who neither reck of state nor land?  
Ellen, thy hand — the ring is thine;  
Each guard and usher knows the sign.  
Seek thou the king without delay;  
This signet shall secure thy way;  
And claim thy suit, whate'er it be,  
As ransom of his pledge to me.”  
He placed the golden circlet on,  
Paused — kiss'd her hand — and then was gone.  
The aged Minstrel stood aghast,  
So hastily Fitz-James shot past.  
He join'd his guide, and wending down  
The ridges of the mountain brown,  
Across the stream they took their way,  
That joins Loch Katrine to Achray.

## XX.

All in the Trosachs' glen was still,  
Noontide was sleeping on the hill:  
Sudden his guide whoop'd loud and high —  
“Murdoch! was that a signal cry?” —  
He stammer'd forth — “I shout to scare  
Yon raven from his dainty fare.”  
He look'd — he knew the raven's prey,  
His own brave steed: — “Ah! gallant gray!  
For thee — for me, perchance — 'twere well  
We ne'er had seen the Trosachs' dell. —  
Murdoch, move first — but silently;  
Whistle or whoop, and thou shalt die!”  
Jealous and sullen on they fared,  
Each silent, each upon his guard.

## XXI.

Now wound the path its dizzy ledge  
Around a precipice's edge,

When lo ! a wasted female form,  
 Blighted by wrath of sun and storm,  
 In tatter'd weeds and wild array,  
 Stood on a cliff beside the way,  
 And glancing round her restless eye,  
 Upon the wood, the rock, the sky,  
 Seem'd nought to mark, yet all to spy.  
 Her brow was wreath'd with gaudy broom ;  
 With gesture wild she waved a plume  
 Of feathers, which the eagles fling  
 To crag and cliff from dusky wing ;  
 Such spoils her desperate step had sought,  
 Where scarce was footing for the goat.  
 The tartan plaid she first descried,  
 And shriek'd till all the rocks replied ;  
 As loud she laugh'd when near they drew,  
 For then the Lowland garb she knew ;  
 And then her hands she wildly wrung,  
 And then she wept, and then she sung —  
 She sung ! — the voice, in better time,  
 Perchance to harp or lute might chime ;  
 And now, though strain'd and roughen'd, still  
 Rung wildly sweet to dale and hill.

## XXII.

## SONG.

They bid me sleep, they bid me pray,  
 They say my brain is warp'd and wrung —  
 I cannot sleep on Highland brae,  
 I cannot pray in Highland tongue.  
 But were I now where Allan glides,  
 Or heard my native Devan's tides,  
 So sweetly would I rest, and pray  
 That Heaven would close my wintry day !  
 'Twas thus my hair they bade me braid,  
 They made me to the church repair ;  
 It was my bridal morn they said,  
 And my true love would meet me there.  
 But woe betide the cruel guile,  
 That drown'd in blood the morning smile !  
 And woe betide the fairy dream !  
 I only waked to sob and scream.

## XXIII.

“Who is this maid? what means her lay?  
She hovers o’er the hollow way,  
And flutters wide her mantle gray,  
As the lone heron spreads his wing,  
By twilight, o’er a haunted spring.”  
“’Tis Blanche of Devan,” Murdoch said,  
“A crazed and captive Lowland maid,  
Ta’en on the morn she was a bride,  
When Roderick foray’d Devan-side.  
The gay bridegroom resistance made,  
And felt our Chief’s unconquer’d blade.  
I marvel she is now at large,  
But oft she ’scapes from Maudlin’s charge. —  
Hence, brain-sick fool!” — He raised his bow: —  
“Now, if thou strik’st her but one blow,  
I’ll pitch thee from the cliff as far  
As ever peasant pitch’d a bar!” —  
“Thanks, champion, thanks!” the Maniac cried,  
And press’d her to Fitz-James’s side.  
“See the gray pennons I prepare,  
To seek my true-love through the air!  
I will not lend that savage groom,  
To break his fall, one downy plume!  
No! — deep amid disjointed stones,  
The wolves shall batten on his bones,  
And then shall his detested plaid,  
By bush and brier in mid air staid,  
Wave forth a banner fair and free,  
Meet signal for their revelry.” —

## XXIV.

“Hush thee, poor maiden, and be still!” —  
“O! thou look’st kindly, and I will. —  
Mine eye has dried and wasted been,  
But still it loves the Lincoln green;  
And, though mine ear is all unstrung,  
Still, still it loves the Lowland tongue.

“For O my sweet William was forester true,  
He stole poor Blanche’s heart away!  
His coat it was all of the greenwood hue,  
And so blithely he trill’d the Lowland lay!



"It was not that I meant to tell . . .  
 But thou art wise, and guessest well."  
 Then, in a low and broken tone,  
 And hurried note, the song went on.  
 Still on the Clansman, fearfully,  
 She fix'd her apprehensive eye;  
 Then turn'd it on the Knight, and then  
 Her look glanced wildly o'er the glen.

## XXV.

"The toils are pitch'd, and the stakes are set,  
 Ever sing merrily, merrily;  
 The bows they bend, and the knives they whet,  
 Hunters live so cheerily.

"It was a stag, a stag of ten,<sup>1</sup>  
 Bearing its branches sturdily;  
 He came stately down the glen,  
 Ever sing hardily, hardily.

"It was there he met with a wounded doe,  
 She was bleeding deathfully;  
 She warn'd him of the toils below,  
 O, so faithfully, faithfully!

"He had an eye, and he could heed,  
 Ever sing warily, warily;  
 He had a foot, and he could speed —  
 Hunters watch so narrowly."

## XXVI.

Fitz-James's mind was passion-toss'd,  
 When Ellen's hints and fears were lost;  
 But Murdoch's shout suspicion wrought,  
 And Blanche's song conviction brought. —  
 Not like a stag that spies the snare,  
 But lion of the hunt aware,  
 He waved at once his blade on high,  
 "Disclose thy treachery, or die!"  
 Forth at full speed the Clansman flew,  
 But in his race his bow he drew.  
 The shaft just grazed Fitz-James's crest,  
 And thrill'd in Blanche's faded breast, —

<sup>1</sup> Having ten branches on his antlers.

Murdoch of Alpine ! prove thy speed,  
For ne'er had Alpine's son such need !  
With heart of fire, and foot of wind,  
The fierce avenger is behind !  
Fate judges of the rapid strife —  
The forfeit death — the prize is life !  
Thy kindred ambush lies before,  
Close couch'd upon the heathery moor ;  
Them couldst thou reach ! — it may not be —  
Thine ambush'd kin thou ne'er shalt see,  
The fiery Saxon gains on thee !  
— Resistless speeds the deadly thrust,  
As lightning strikes the pine to dust ;  
With foot and hand Fitz-James must strain  
Ere he can win his blade again.  
Bent o'er the fall'n, with falcon eye,  
He grimly smiled to see him die ;  
Then slower wended back his way,  
Where the poor maiden bleeding lay.

## XXVII.

She sate beneath the birchen tree,  
Her elbow resting on her knee ;  
She had withdrawn the fatal shaft,  
And gazed on it, and feebly laugh'd ;  
Her wreath of broom and feathers gray  
Daggled with blood, beside her lay.  
The Knight to stanch the life-stream tried, —  
“ Stranger, it is in vain ! ” she cried.  
“ This hour of death has given me more  
Of reason's power than years before ;  
For, as these ebbing veins decay,  
My frenzied visions fade away.  
A helpless injured wretch I die,  
And something tells me in thine eye,  
That thou wert mine avenger born. —  
Seest thou this tress ? — O ! still I've worn  
This little tress of yellow hair,  
Through danger, frenzy, and despair !  
It once was bright and clear as thine,  
But blood and tears have dimm'd its shine.  
I will not tell thee when 'twas shred,  
Nor from what guiltless victim's head —

My brain would turn! — but it shall wave  
 Like plumage on thy helmet brave,  
 Till sun and wind shall bleach the stain,  
 And thou wilt bring it me again. —  
 I waver still. — O God! more bright  
 Let reason beam her parting light! —  
 O! by thy knighthood's honor'd sign,  
 And for thy life preserved by mine,  
 When thou shalt see a darksome man,  
 Who boasts him Chief of Alpine's Clan,  
 With tartans broad and shadowy plume,  
 And hand of blood, and brow of gloom,  
 Be thy heart bold, thy weapon strong,  
 And wreak poor Blanche of Devan's wrong! —  
 They watch for thee by pass and fell . . .  
 Avoid the path . . . O God! . . . farewell."

## XXVIII.

A kindly heart had brave Fitz-James;  
 Fast pour'd his eyes at pity's claims,  
 And now, with mingled grief and ire,  
 He saw the murder'd maid expire.  
 "God, in my need, be my relief,  
 As I wreak this on yonder Chief!"  
 A lock from Blanche's tresses fair  
 He blended with her bridegroom's hair;  
 The mingled braid in blood he dyed,  
 And placed it on his bonnet-side:  
 "By Him whose word is truth! I swear,  
 No other favor will I wear,  
 Till this sad token I imbrue  
 In the best blood of Roderick Dhu!  
 — But hark! what means yon faint halloo?  
 The chase is up, — but they shall know,  
 The stag at bay's a dangerous foe."  
 Barr'd from the known but guarded way,  
 Through copse and cliffs Fitz-James must stray,  
 And oft must change his desperate track,  
 By stream and precipice turn'd back.  
 Heartless, fatigued, and faint, at length,  
 From lack of food and loss of strength,  
 He couch'd him in a thicket hoar,  
 And thought his toils and perils o'er: —

“Of all my rash adventures past,  
This frantic feat must prove the last!  
Who e’er so mad but might have guess’d,  
That all this Highland hornet’s nest  
Would muster up in swarms so soon  
As e’er they heard of bands at Doune? —  
Like bloodhounds now they search me out, —  
Hark, to the whistle and the shout! —  
If further through the wilds I go,  
I only fall upon the foe:  
I’ll couch me here till evening gray,  
Then darkling try my dangerous way.”

## XXIX.

The shades of eve come slowly down,  
The woods are wrapt in deeper brown,  
The owl awakens from her dell,  
The fox is heard upon the fell;  
Enough remains of glimmering light  
To guide the wanderer’s steps aright,  
Yet not enough from far to show  
His figure to the watchful foe.  
With cautious step, and ear awake,  
He climbs the crag and threads the brake;  
And not the summer solstice, there,  
Temper’d the midnight mountain air,  
But every breeze, that swept the wold,  
Benumb’d his drenched limbs with cold.  
In dread, in danger, and alone,  
Famish’d and chill’d, through ways unknown,  
Tangled and steep, he journey’d on;  
Till, as a rock’s huge point he turn’d,  
A watch-fire close before him burn’d.

## XXX.

Beside its embers red and clear,  
Bask’d, in his plaid, a mountaineer;  
And up he sprung with sword in hand, —  
“Thy name and purpose! Saxon, stand!”  
“A stranger.” “What dost thou require?” —  
“Rest and a guide, and food and fire.  
My life’s beset, my path is lost,  
The gale has chill’d my limbs with frost.”

"Art thou a friend to Roderick?" "No."  
 "Thou dardest not call thyself a foe?"  
 "I dare! to him and all the band  
 He brings to aid his murderous hand."  
 "Bold words! — but, though the beast of game  
 The privilege of chase may claim,  
 Though space and law the stag we lend,  
 Ere hound we slip, or bow we bend,  
 Who ever reck'd, where, how, or when,  
 The prowling fox was trapp'd or slain?  
 Thus treacherous scouts, — yet sure they lie,  
 Who say thou camest a secret spy!" —  
 "They do, by heaven! — Come Roderick Dhu,  
 And of his clan the boldest two,  
 And let me but till morning rest,  
 I write the falsehood on their crest."  
 "If by the blaze I mark aright,  
 Thou bear'st the belt and spur of Knight."  
 "Then by these tokens may'st thou know  
 Each proud oppressor's mortal foe." —  
 "Enough, enough; sit down and share  
 A soldier's couch, a soldier's fare."

## XXXI.

He gave him of his Highland cheer,  
 The harden'd flesh of mountain deer;  
 Dry fuel on the fire he laid,  
 And bade the Saxon share his plaid.  
 He tended him like welcome guest,  
 Then thus his further speech address'd: —  
 "Stranger, I am to Roderick Dhu  
 A clansman born, a kinsman true;  
 Each word against his honor spoke,  
 Demands of me avenging stroke;  
 Yet more, — upon thy fate, 'tis said,  
 A mighty augury is laid.  
 It rests with me to wind my horn, —  
 Thou art with numbers overborne;  
 It rests with me, here, brand to brand,  
 Worn as thou art, to bid thee stand:  
 But, not for clan, nor kindred's cause,  
 Will I depart from honor's laws;

To assail a wearied man were shame,  
 And stranger is a holy name ;  
 Guidance and rest, and food and fire,  
 In vain he never must require.  
 Then rest thee here till dawn of day ;  
 Myself will guide thee on the way,  
 O'er stock and stone, through watch and ward,  
 Till past Clan-Alpine's outmost guard,  
 As far as Coilantogle's ford ;  
 From thence thy warrant is thy sword."  
 " I take thy courtesy, by heaven,  
 As freely as 'tis nobly given !"  
 " Well, rest thee ; for the bittern's cry  
 Sings us the lake's wild lullaby."  
 With that he shook the gather'd heath,  
 And spread his plaid upon the wreath ;  
 And the brave foemen, side by side,  
 Lay peaceful down like brothers tried,  
 And slept until the dawning beam  
 Purpled the mountain and the stream.

## CANTO FIFTH.

## THE COMBAT.

## I.

FAIR as the earliest beam of eastern light,  
 When first, by the bewilder'd pilgrim spied,  
 It smiles upon the dreary brow of night,  
 And silvers o'er the torrent's foaming tide,  
 And lights the fearful path on mountain side ; —  
 Fair as that beam, although the fairest far,  
 Giving to horror grace, to danger pride,  
 Shine martial Faith, and Courtesy's bright star,  
 Through all the wreckful storms that cloud the brow  
 of War.

## II.

That early beam, so fair and sheen,  
 Was twinkling through the hazel screen,

When, rousing at its glimmer red,  
The warriors left their lowly bed,  
Look'd out upon the dappled sky,  
Mutter'd their soldier matins by,  
And then awaked their fire, to steal,  
As short and rude, their soldier meal.  
That o'er, the Gael<sup>1</sup> around him threw  
His graceful plaid of varied hue,  
And, true to promise, led the way,  
By thicket green and mountain gray.  
A wildering path! — they winded now  
Along the precipice's brow,  
Commanding the rich scenes beneath,  
The windings of the Forth and Teith,  
And all the vales between that lie,  
Till Stirling's turrets melt in sky;  
Then, sunk in copse, their farthest glance  
Gain'd not the length of horseman's lance.  
'Twas oft so steep, the foot was fain  
Assistance from the hand to gain;  
So tangled oft, that, bursting through,  
Each hawthorn shed her showers of dew, —  
That diamond dew, so pure and clear,  
It rivals all but Beauty's tear!

## III.

At length they came where, stern and stèep,  
The hill sinks down upon the deep.  
Here Vennachar in silver flows,  
There, ridge on ridge, Benledi rose;  
Ever the hollow path twined on,  
Beneath steep bank and threatening stone;  
An hundred men might hold the post  
With hardihood against a host.  
The rugged mountain's scanty cloak  
Was dwarfish shrubs of birch and oak,  
With shingles bare, and cliffs between,  
And patches bright of bracken green,  
And heather black, that waved so high,  
It held the copse in rivalry.

<sup>1</sup> The Scottish Highlander calls himself *Gael*, or Gaul, and terms the Lowlanders *Sassenach*, or Saxons.



But where the lake slept deep and still,  
Dank osiers fringed the swamp and hill;  
And oft both path and hill were torn,  
Where wintry torrents down had borne,  
And heap'd upon the cumber'd land  
Its wreck of gravel, rocks, and sand.  
So toilsome was the road to trace,  
The guide, abating of his pace,  
Led slowly through the pass's jaws,  
And ask'd Fitz-James, by what strange cause  
He sought these wilds? traversed by few,  
Without a pass from Roderick Dhu.

## IV.

"Brave Gael, my pass, in danger tried,  
Hangs in my belt, and by my side;  
Yet, sooth to tell," the Saxon said,  
"I dreamt not now to claim its aid.  
When here, but three days since, I came,  
Bewilder'd in pursuit of game,  
All seem'd as peaceful and as still,  
As the mist slumbering on yon hill;  
Thy dangerous Chief was then afar,  
Nor soon expected back from war.  
Thus said, at least, my mountain-guide,  
Though deep perchance the villain lied."  
"Yet why a second venture try?"  
"A warrior thou, and ask me why! —  
Moves our free course by such fix'd cause,  
As gives the poor mechanic laws?  
Enough, I sought to drive away  
The lazy hours of peaceful day;  
Slight cause will then suffice to guide  
A Knight's free footsteps far and wide, —  
A falcon flown, a greyhound stray'd,  
The merry glance of mountain maid:  
Or, if a path be dangerous known,  
The danger's self is lure alone." —

## V.

"Thy secret keep, I urge thee not; —  
Yet, ere again ye sought this spot,

Say, heard ye nought of Lowland war,  
 Against Clan-Alpine, rais'd by Mar ?”  
 — “ No, by my word ; — of bands prepared  
 To guard King James's sports I heard ;  
 Nor doubt I aught, but, when they hear  
 This muster of the mountaineer,  
 Their pennons will abroad be flung,  
 Which else in Doune had peaceful hung.” —  
 “ Free be they flung ! for we were loth  
 Their silken folds should feast the moth.  
 Free be they flung ! — as free shall wave  
 Clan-Alpine's pine in banner brave.  
 But, Stranger, peaceful since you came,  
 Bewilder'd in the mountain game,  
 Whence the bold boast by which you show  
 Vich-Alpine's vow'd and mortal foe ? ” —  
 “ Warrior, but yester-morn, I knew  
 Nought of thy Chieftain, Roderick Dhu,  
 Save as an outlaw'd desperate man,  
 The chief of a rebellious clan,  
 Who, in the Regent's court and sight,  
 With ruffian dagger stabb'd a knight :  
 Yet this alone might from his part  
 Sever each true and loyal heart.”

## VI.

Wrothful at such arraignment foul,  
 Dark lower'd the clansman's sable scowl.  
 A space he paused, then sternly said,  
 “ And heard'st thou why he drew his blade ?  
 Heard'st thou, that shameful word and blow  
 Brought Roderick's vengeance on his foe ?  
 What reck'd the Chieftain if he stood  
 On Highland heath, or Holy-Rood ?  
 He rights such wrong where it is given,  
 If it were in the court of heaven.” —  
 “ Still was it outrage ; — yet, 'tis true,  
 Not then claim'd sovereignty his due ;  
 While Albany, with feeble hand,  
 Held borrow'd truncheon of command,  
 The young King, mew'd in Stirling tower,  
 Was stranger to respect and power.  
 But then, thy Chieftain's robber life ! —

Winning mean prey by causeless strife,  
 Wrenching from ruin'd Lowland swain  
 His herds and harvest rear'd in vain. —  
 Methinks a soul, like thine, should scorn  
 The spoils from such foul foray borne."

## VII.

The Gael beheld him grim the while,  
 And answer'd with disdainful smile, —  
 "Saxon, from yonder mountain high,  
 I mark'd thee send delighted eye,  
 Far to the south and east, where lay,  
 Extended in succession gay,  
 Deep waving fields and pastures green,  
 With gentle slopes and groves between: —  
 These fertile plains, that soften'd vale,  
 Were once the birthright of the Gael;  
 The stranger came with iron hand,  
 And from our fathers reft the land.  
 Where dwell we now! See, rudely swell  
 Crag over crag, and fell o'er fell.  
 Ask we this savage hill we tread,  
 For fatten'd steer or household bread;  
 Ask we for flocks these shingles dry,  
 And well the mountain might reply, —  
 'To you, as to your sires of yore,  
 Belong the target and claymore!  
 I give you shelter in my breast,  
 Your own good blades must win the rest.'  
 Pent in this fortress of the North,  
 Think'st thou we will not sally forth,  
 To spoil the spoiler as we may,  
 And from the robber rend the prey?  
 Ay, by my soul! — While on yon plain  
 The Saxon rears one shock of grain;  
 While, of ten thousand herds, there strays  
 But one along yon river's maze, —  
 The Gael, of plain and river heir,  
 Shall, with strong hand, redeem his share.  
 Where live the mountain Chiefs who hold  
 That plundering Lowland field and fold  
 Is aught but retribution true?  
 Seek other cause 'gainst Roderick Dhu." —

## VIII.

Answer'd Fitz-James, — " And, if I sought,  
 Think'st thou no other could be brought?  
 What deem ye of my path waylaid?  
 My life given o'er to ambuscade?" —  
 " As of a meed to rashness due:  
 Hadst thou sent warning fair and true, —  
 I seek my hound, or falcon stray'd,  
 I seek, good faith, a Highland maid, —  
 Free hadst thou been to come and go;  
 But secret path marks secret foe.  
 Nor yet, for this, even as a spy,  
 Hadst thou, unheard, been doom'd to die,  
 Save to fulfil an augury." —  
 " Well, let it pass; nor will I now  
 Fresh cause of enmity avow,  
 To chafe thy mood and cloud thy brow.  
 Enough, I am by promise tied  
 To match me with this man of pride:  
 Twice have I sought Clan-Alpine's glen  
 In peace; but when I come again,  
 I come with banner, brand, and bow,  
 As leader seeks his mortal foe.  
 For love-lorn swain, in lady's bower,  
 Ne'er panted for the appointed hour,  
 As I, until before me stand  
 This rebel Chieftain and his band!"

## IX.

" Have, then, thy wish!" — He whistled shrill,  
 And he was answer'd from the hill;  
 Wild as the scream of the curlew,  
 From crag to crag the signal flew.  
 Instant, through copse and heath, arose  
 Bonnets and spears and bended bows;  
 On right, on left, above, below,  
 Sprung up at once the lurking foe;  
 From shingles gray their lances start,  
 The bracken bush sends forth the dart,  
 The rushes and the willow-wand  
 Are bristling into axe and brand,  
 And every tuft of broom gives life  
 To plaided warrior arm'd for strife.

That whistle garrison'd the glen  
At once with full five hundred men,  
As if the yawning hill to heaven  
A subterranean host had given.  
Watching their leader's beck and will,  
All silent there they stood, and still.  
Like the loose crags whose threatening mass  
Lay tottering o'er the hollow pass,  
As if an infant's touch could urge  
Their headlong passage down the verge,  
With step and weapon forward flung,  
Upon the mountain-side they hung.  
The mountaineer cast glance of pride  
Along Benledi's living side,  
Then fix'd his eye and sable brow  
Full on Fitz-James — "How say'st thou now?  
These are Clan-Alpine's warriors true;  
And, Saxon, — I am Roderick Dhu!"

## X.

Fitz-James was brave: — Though to his heart  
The life-blood thrill'd with sudden start,  
He mann'd himself with dauntless air,  
Return'd the Chief his haughty stare,  
His back against a rock he bore,  
And firmly placed his foot before: —  
"Come one, come all! this rock shall fly  
From its firm base as soon as I."  
Sir Roderick mark'd — and in his eyes  
Respect was mingled with surprise,  
And the stern joy which warriors feel  
In foemen worthy of their steel.  
Short space he stood — then waved his hand:  
Down sunk the disappearing band;  
Each warrior vanish'd where he stood,  
In broom or bracken, heath or wood;  
Sunk brand and spear and bended bow,  
In osiers pale and copses low;  
It seem'd as if their mother Earth  
Had swallow'd up her warlike birth.  
The wind's last breath had toss'd in air,  
Pennon, and plaid, and plumage fair, —  
The next but swept a lone hill-side,

Where heath and fern were waving wide :  
The sun's last glance was glinted back,  
From spear and glaive, from targe and jack, —  
The next, all unreflected, shone  
On bracken green, and cold gray stone.

## XI.

Fitz-James look'd round — yet scarce believed  
The witness that his sight received ;  
Such apparition well might seem  
Delusion of a dreadful dream.

Sir Roderick in suspense he eyed,  
And to his look the Chief replied,  
“ Fear naught — nay, that I need not say —  
But — doubt not aught from mine array.  
Thou art my guest ; — I pledged my word  
As far as Coilantogle ford :

Nor would I call a clansman's brand  
For aid against one valiant hand,  
Though on our strife lay every vale  
Rent by the Saxon from the Gael.

So move we on ; — I only meant  
To show the reed on which you leant,  
Deeming this path you might pursue  
Without a pass from Roderick Dhu.”

They moved : — I said Fitz-James was brave,  
As ever knight that belted glaive ;  
Yet dare not say, that now his blood  
Kept on its wont and temper'd flood,  
As, following Roderick's stride, he drew  
That seeming lonesome pathway through,  
Which yet, by fearful proof, was rife  
With lances, that, to take his life,  
Waited but signal from a guide,  
So late dishonor'd and defied.

Ever, by stealth, his eye sought round  
The vanish'd guardians of the ground,  
And still, from copse and heather deep,  
Fancy saw spear and broadsword peep,  
And in the plover's shrilly strain,  
The signal whistle heard again.  
Nor breathed he free till far behind  
The pass was left ; for then they wind

Along a wide and level green,  
Where neither tree nor tuft was seen,  
Nor rush nor bush of broom was near,  
To hide a bonnet or a spear.

## XII.

The Chief in silence strode before,  
And reach'd that torrent's sounding shore,  
Which, daughter of three mighty lakes,  
From Vennachar in silver breaks,  
Sweeps through the plain, and ceaseless mines  
On Bochastle the mouldering lines,  
Where Rome, the Empress of the world,  
Of yore her eagle wings unfurl'd.  
And here his course the Chieftain staid,  
Threw down his target and his plaid,  
And to the Lowland warrior said —  
"Bold Saxon! to his promise just,  
Vich-Alpine has discharged his trust.  
This murderous Chief, this ruthless man,  
This head of a rebellious clan,  
Hath led thee safe, through watch and ward,  
Far past Clan-Alpine's outmost guard.  
Now, man to man, and steel to steel,  
A Chieftain's vengeance thou shalt feel.  
See, here, all vantageless I stand,  
Arm'd, like thyself, with single brand:  
For this is Coilantogle ford,  
And thou must keep thee with thy sword."

## XIII.

The Saxon paused: — "I ne'er delay'd,  
When foeman bade me draw my blade;  
Nay more, brave Chief, I vow'd thy death:  
Yet sure thy fair and generous faith,  
And my deep debt for life preserved,  
A better meed have well deserved:  
Can nought but blood our feud atone?  
Are there no means?" — "No, Stranger, none!  
And hear, — to fire thy flagging zeal, —  
The Saxon cause rests on thy steel;  
For thus spoke Fate, by prophet bred  
Between the living and the dead;



'Who spills the foremost foeman's life,  
 His party conquers in the strife.'"  
 "Then, by my word," the Saxon said,  
 "The riddle is already read.  
 Seek yonder brake beneath the cliff, —  
 There lies Red Murdoch, stark and stiff.  
 Thus Fate hath solved her prophecy,  
 Then yield to Fate, and not to me.  
 To James, at Stirling, let us go,  
 When, if thou wilt be still his foe,  
 Or if the King shall not agree  
 To grant thee grace and favor free,  
 I plight mine honor, oath, and word,  
 That, to thy native strengths restored,  
 With each advantage shalt thou stand,  
 That aids thee now to guard thy land."

## XIV.

Dark lightning flash'd from Roderick's eye —  
 "Soars thy presumption, then, so high,  
 Because a wretched kern ye slew,  
 Homage to name to Roderick Dhu?  
 He yields not, he, to man nor Fate!  
 Thou add'st but fuel to my hate: —  
 My clansman's blood demands revenge.  
 Not yet prepared? — By heaven, I change  
 My thought, and hold thy valor light  
 As that of some vain carpet knight,  
 Who ill deserved my courteous care,  
 And whose best boast is but to wear  
 A braid of his fair lady's hair." —  
 "I thank thee, Roderick, for the word!  
 It nerves my heart, it steels my sword;  
 For I have sworn this braid to stain  
 In the best blood that warms thy vein.  
 Now, truce, farewell! and, ruth, begone! —  
 Yet think not that by thee alone,  
 Proud Chief! can courtesy be shown;  
 Though not from copse, or heath, or cairn,  
 Start at my whistle clansmen stern,  
 Of this small horn one feeble blast  
 Would fearful odds against thee cast.

But fear not — doubt not — which thou wilt —  
We try this quarrel hilt to hilt.”  
Then each at once his falchion drew,  
Each on the ground his scabbard threw,  
Each look'd to sun, and stream, and plain,  
As what they ne'er might see again;  
Then foot, and point, and eye opposed,  
In dubious strife they darkly closed.

## XV.

Ill fared it then with Roderick Dhu,  
That on the field his targe he threw,  
Whose brazen studs and tough bull-hide  
Had death so often dash'd aside;  
For, train'd abroad his arms to wield,  
Fitz-James's blade was sword and shield.  
He practised every pass and ward,  
To thrust, to strike, to feint, to guard;  
While less expert, though stronger far,  
The Gael maintain'd unequal war.  
Three times in closing strife they stood,  
And thrice the Saxon blade drank blood;  
No stinted draught, no scanty tide,  
The gushing flood the tartans dyed.  
Fierce Roderick felt the fatal drain,  
And shower'd his blows like wintry rain;  
And, as firm rock, or castle-roof,  
Against the winter shower is proof,  
The foe, invulnerable still,  
Foil'd his wild rage by steady skill;  
Till, at advantage ta'en, his brand  
Forced Roderick's weapon from his hand,  
And backward borne upon the lea,  
Brought the proud Chieftain to his knee.

## XVI.

“Now, yield thee, or by Him who made  
The world, thy heart's blood dyes my blade!” —  
“Thy threats, thy mercy, I defy!  
Let recreant yield, who fears to die.”  
— Like adder darting from his coil,  
Like wolf that dashes through the toil,

Like mountain-cat who guards her young,  
Full at Fitz-James's throat he sprung;  
Receiv'd, but reck'd not of a wound,  
And lock'd his arms his foeman round. —  
Now, gallant Saxon, hold thine own!  
No maiden's hand is round thee thrown!  
That desperate grasp thy frame might feel,  
Through bars of brass and triple steel! —  
They tug, they strain! down, down they go,  
The Gael above, Fitz-James below.  
The Chieftain's gripe his throat compress'd,  
His knee was planted on his breast;  
His clotted locks he backward threw,  
Across his brow his hand he drew,  
From blood and mist to clear his sight,  
Then gleam'd aloft his dagger bright! —  
— But hate and fury ill supplied  
The stream of life's exhausted tide,  
And all too late the advantage came,  
To turn the odds of deadly game;  
For, while the dagger gleam'd on high,  
Reel'd soul and sense, reel'd brain and eye.  
Down came the blow! but in the heath  
The erring blade found bloodless sheath.  
The struggling foe may now unclasp  
The fainting Chief's relaxing grasp;  
Unwounded from the dreadful close,  
But breathless all, Fitz-James arose.

## XVII.

He falter'd thanks to Heaven for life,  
Redeem'd, unhop'd, from desperate strife;  
Next on his foe his look he cast,  
Whose every gasp appear'd his last;  
In Roderick's gore he dipp'd the braid, —  
“Poor Blanche! thy wrongs are dearly paid:  
Yet with thy foe must die, or live,  
The praise that faith and valor give.”  
With that he blew a bugle note,  
Undid the collar from his throat,  
Unbonneted, and by the wave  
Sate down his brow and hands to lave.

Then faint afar are heard the feet  
Of rushing steeds in gallop fleet ;  
The sounds increase, and now are seen  
Four mounted squires in Lincoln green ;  
Two who bear lance, and two who lead,  
By loosen'd rein, a saddled steed ;  
Each onward held his headlong course,  
And by Fitz-James rein'd up his horse, —  
With wonder view'd the bloody spot —  
— “ Exclaim not, gallants ! question not. —  
You, Herbert and Luffness, alight,  
And bind the wounds of yonder knight ;  
Let the gray palfrey bear his weight,  
We destined for a fairer freight,  
And bring him on to Stirling straight ;  
I will before at better speed,  
To seek fresh horse and fitting weed.  
The sun rides high ; — I must be boune,  
To see the archer-game at noon ;  
But lightly Bayard clears the lea. —  
De Vaux and Herries, follow me.

## XVIII.

“ Stand, Bayard, stand ! ” — the steed obey'd,  
With arching neck and bended head,  
And glancing eye and quivering ear,  
As if he loved his lord to hear.  
No foot Fitz-James in stirrup staid,  
No grasp upon the saddle laid,  
But wreath'd his left hand in the mane,  
And lightly bounded from the plain,  
Turn'd on the horse his armed heel,  
And stirr'd his courage with the steel.  
Bounded the fiery steed in air,  
The rider sate erect and fair,  
Then like a bolt from steel cross-bow  
Forth launch'd, along the plain they go.  
They dash'd that rapid torrent through,  
And up Carhonie's hill they flew ;  
Still at the gallop prick'd the Knight,  
His merry-men follow'd as they might,  
Along thy banks, swift Teith ! they ride,  
And in the race they mock thy tide ;

Torry and Lendrick now are past,  
 And Deanstown lies behind them cast ;  
 They rise, the banner'd towers of Doune,  
 They sink in distant woodland soon ;  
 Blair-Drummond sees the hoofs strike fire,  
 They sweep like breeze through Ochertyre ;  
 They mark just glance and disappear  
 The lofty brow of ancient Kier ;  
 They bathe their coursers' sweltering sides,  
 Dark Forth ! amid thy sluggish tides,  
 And on the opposing shore take ground,  
 With plash, with scramble, and with bound.  
 Right-hand they leave thy cliffs, Craig-Forth !  
 And soon the bulwark of the North,  
 Gray Stirling, with her towers and town,  
 Upon their fleet career look'd down,

## XIX.

As up the flinty path they strain'd,  
 Sudden his steed the leader rein'd ;  
 A signal to his squire he flung,  
 Who instant to his stirrup sprung : —  
 "Seest thou, De Vaux, yon woodsman gray,  
 Who town-ward holds the rocky way,  
 Of stature tall and poor array ?  
 Mark'st thou the firm, yet active stride,  
 With which he scales the mountain-side ?  
 Know'st thou from whence he comes, or whom ?"  
 "No, by my word ;—a burly groom  
 He seems, who in the field or chase  
 A baron's train would nobly grace." —  
 "Out, out, De Vaux ! can fear supply,  
 And jealousy, no sharper eye ?  
 Afar, ere to the hill he drew,  
 That stately form and step I knew ;  
 Like form in Scotland is not seen,  
 Treads not such step on Scottish green.  
 'Tis James of Douglas, by St. Serle !  
 The uncle of the banish'd Earl.  
 Away, away, to court, to show  
 The near approach of dreaded foe :  
 The King must stand upon his guard ;  
 Douglas and he must meet prepared."

Then right-hand wheel'd their steeds, and straight  
They won the castle's postern gate.

## XX.

The Douglas, who had bent his way  
From Cambus-Kenneth's abbey gray,  
Now, as he climb'd the rocky shelf,  
Held sad communion with himself : —  
“ Yes ! all is true my fears could frame ;  
A prisoner lies the noble Græme,  
And fiery Roderick soon will feel  
The vengeance of the royal steel.  
I, only I, can ward their fate, —  
God grant the ransom come not late !  
The abbess hath her promise given,  
My child shall be the bride of heaven ; —  
— Be pardon'd one repining tear !  
For He, who gave her, knows how dear,  
How excellent ! — but that is by,  
And now my business is — to die.  
— Ye towers ! within whose circuit dread  
A Douglas by his sovereign bled ;  
And thou, O sad and fatal mound !  
That oft hast heard the death-axe sound,  
As, on the noblest of the land  
Fell the stern headsman's bloody hand, —  
The dungeon, block, and nameless tomb  
Prepare — for Douglas seeks his doom !  
— But hark ! what blithe and jolly peal  
Makes the Franciscan steeple reel ?  
And see ! upon the crowded street,  
In motley groups what masquers meet !  
Banner and pageant, pipe and drum,  
And merry morrice-dancers come.  
I guess, by all this quaint array,  
The burghers hold their sports to-day.  
James will be there ; he loves such show,  
Where the good yeoman bends his bow,  
And the tough wrestler foils his foe,  
As well as where, in proud career,  
The high-born tilter shivers spear.  
I'll follow to the Castle-park,  
And play my prize ; — King James shall mark



If age has tamed these sinews stark,  
Whose force so oft, in happier days,  
His boyish wonder loved to praise."

## XXI.

The Castle gates were open flung,  
The quivering draw-bridge rock'd and rung,  
And echo'd loud the flinty street  
Beneath the coursers' clattering feet,  
As slowly down the steep descent  
Fair Scotland's King and nobles went,  
While all along the crowded way  
Was jubilee and loud huzza.  
And ever James was bending low,  
To his white jennet's saddlebow,  
Doffing his cap to city dame,  
Who smiled and blush'd for pride and shame.  
And well the simperer might be vain, —  
He chose the fairest of the train.  
Gravely he greets each city sire,  
Commends each pageant's quaint attire,  
Gives to the dancers thanks aloud,  
And smiles and nods upon the crowd,  
Who rend the heavens with their acclaims, —  
"Long live the Commons' King, King James!"  
Behind the King throng'd peer and knight,  
And noble dame and damsel bright,  
Whose fiery steeds ill brook'd the stay  
Of the steep street and crowded way.  
— But in the train you might discern  
Dark lowering brow and visage stern;  
There nobles mourn'd their pride restrain'd,  
And the mean burgher's joys disdain'd;  
And chiefs, who, hostage for their clan,  
Were each from home a banish'd man,  
There thought upon their own gray tower,  
Their waving woods, their feudal power,  
And deem'd themselves a shameful part  
Of pageant which they cursed in heart.

## XXII.

Now, in the Castle-park, drew out  
Their chequer'd bands the joyous rout.



There morricers, with bell at heel,  
And blade in hand, their mazes wheel ;  
But chief, beside the butts, there stand  
Bold Robin Hood and all his band, —  
Friar Tuck with quarterstaff and cowl,  
Old Scathelocke with his surly scowl,  
Maid Marion, fair as ivory bone,  
Scarlet, and Mutch, and Little John ;  
Their bugles challenge all that will,  
In archery to prove their skill.  
The Douglas bent a bow of might, —  
His first shaft centred in the white,  
And when in turn he shot again,  
His second split the first in twain.  
From the King's hand must Douglas take  
A silver dart, the archer's stake ;  
Fondly he watch'd, with watery eye,  
Some answering glance of sympathy, —  
No kind emotion made reply !  
Indifferent as to archer wight,  
The monarch gave the arrow bright.

## XXIII.

Now, clear the ring ! for, hand to hand,  
The manly wrestlers take their stand.  
Two o'er the rest superior rose,  
And proud demanded mightier foes,  
Nor call'd in vain ; for Douglas came.  
— For life is Hugh of Larbert lame ;  
Scarce better John of Alloa's fare,  
Whom senseless home his comrades bare.  
Prize of the wrestling match, the King  
To Douglas gave a golden ring,  
While coldly glanced his eye of blue,  
As frozen drop of wintry dew.  
Douglas would speak, but in his breast  
His struggling soul his words suppress'd ;  
Indignant then he turn'd him where  
Their arms the brawny yeomen bare,  
To hurl the massive bar in air.  
When each his utmost strength had shown,  
The Douglas rent an earth-fast stone

From its deep bed, then heaved it high,  
And sent the fragment through the sky,  
A rood beyond the farthest mark;  
And still in Stirling's royal park,  
The gray-hair'd sires, who know the past,  
To strangers point the Douglas-cast,  
And moralize on the decay  
Of Scottish strength in modern day.

## XXIV.

The vale with loud applauses rang,  
The Ladies' Rock sent back the clang.  
The King, with look unmoved, bestow'd  
A purse well fill'd with pieces broad.  
Indignant smiled the Douglas proud,  
And threw the gold among the crowd,  
Who now, with anxious wonder, scan,  
And sharper glance, the dark gray man;  
Till whispers rose among the throng,  
That heart so free, and hand so strong,  
Must to the Douglas blood belong;  
The old men mark'd and shook the head,  
To see his hair with silver spread,  
And wink'd aside, and told each son,  
Of feats upon the English done,  
Ere Douglas of the stalwart hand  
Was exiled from his native land.  
The women prais'd his stately form,  
Though wreck'd by many a winter's storm;  
The youth with awe and wonder saw  
His strength surpassing Nature's law.  
Thus judged, as is their wont, the crowd,  
Till murmur rose to clamors loud.  
But not a glance from that proud ring  
Of peers who circled round the King,  
With Douglas held communion kind,  
Or call'd the banish'd man to mind;  
No, not from those who, at the chase,  
Once held his side the honor'd place,  
Begirt his board, and, in the field,  
Found safety underneath his shield;  
For he, whom royal eyes disown,  
When was his form to courtiers known!

## XXV.

The Monarch saw the gambols flag,  
And bade let loose a gallant stag,  
Whose pride, the holiday to crown,  
Two favorite greyhounds should pull down,  
That venison free, and Bourdeaux wine,  
Might serve the archery to dine.  
But Lufra, — whom from Douglas' side  
Nor bribe nor threat could e'er divide,  
The fleetest hound in all the North, —  
Brave Lufra saw, and darted forth.  
She left the royal hounds mid-way,  
And dashing on the antler'd prey,  
Sunk her sharp muzzle in his flank,  
And deep the flowing life-blood drank.  
The King's stout huntsman saw the sport  
By strange intruder broken short,  
Came up, and with his leash unbound,  
In anger struck the noble hound.  
— The Douglas had endured, that morn,  
The King's cold look, the nobles' scorn,  
And last, and worst to spirit proud,  
Had borne the pity of the crowd;  
But Lufra had been fondly bred,  
To share his board, to watch his bed,  
And oft would Ellen, Lufra's neck  
In maiden glee with garlands deck;  
They were such playmates, that with name  
Of Lufra, Ellen's image came.  
His stifled wrath is brimming high,  
In darken'd brow and flashing eye;  
As waves before the bark divide,  
The crowd gave way before his stride;  
Needs but a buffet and no more,  
The groom lies senseless in his gore.  
Such blow no other hand could deal,  
Though gauntleted in glove of steel.

## XXVI.

Then clamor'd loud the royal train,  
And brandish'd swords and staves amain,  
But stern the Baron's warning — "Back!

Back, on your lives, ye menial pack !  
Beware the Douglas. — Yes ! behold,  
King James ! The Douglas, doom'd of old,  
And vainly sought for near and far,  
A victim to atone the war,  
A willing victim, now attends,  
Nor craves thy grace but for his friends." —  
"Thus is my clemency repaid ?  
Presumptuous Lord !" the Monarch said ;  
"Of thy mis-proud ambitious clan,  
Thou, James of Bothwell, wert the man,  
The only man, in whom a foe  
My woman-mercy would not know :  
But shall a Monarch's presence brook  
Injurious blow, and haughty look ? —  
What ho ! the Captain of our Guard !  
Give the offender fitting ward. —  
Break off the sports !" — for tumult rose,  
And yeomen 'gan to bend their bows, —  
"Break off the sports !" he said, and frown'd,  
"And bid our horsemen clear the ground."

## XXVII.

Then uproar wild and misarray  
Marr'd the fair form of festal day.  
The horsemen prick'd among the crowd,  
Repell'd by threats and insult loud ;  
To earth are borne the old and weak,  
The timorous fly, the women shriek ;  
With flint, with shaft, with staff, with bar,  
The hardier urge tumultuous war.  
At once round Douglas darkly sweep  
The royal spears in circle deep,  
And slowly scale the pathway steep ;  
While on the rear in thunder pour  
The rabble with disorder'd roar.  
With grief the noble Douglas saw  
The Commons rise against the law,  
And to the leading soldier said, —  
"Sir John of Hyndford ! 'twas my blade,  
That knighthood on thy shoulder laid ;  
For that good deed, permit me then  
A word with these misguided men.

## XXVIII.

“Hear, gentle friends ! ere yet for me,  
Ye break the bands of fealty.  
My life, my honor, and my cause,  
I tender free to Scotland’s laws.  
Are these so weak as must require  
The aid of your misguided ire ?  
Or, if I suffer causeless wrong,  
Is then my selfish rage so strong,  
My sense of public weal so low,  
That, for mean vengeance on a foe,  
Those cords of love I should unbind,  
Which knit my country and my kind ?  
Oh no ! Believe, in yonder tower  
It will not soothe my captive hour,  
To know those spears our foes should dread,  
For me in kindred gore are red ;  
To know, in fruitless brawl begun,  
For me, that mother wails her son ;  
For me, that widow’s mate expires ;  
For me, that orphans weep their sires ;  
That patriots mourn insulted laws,  
And curse the Douglas for the cause.  
O let your patience ward such ill,  
And keep your right to love me still !”

## XXIX.

The crowd’s wild fury sunk again  
In tears, as tempests melt in rain.  
With lifted hands and eyes, they pray’d  
For blessings on his generous head,  
Who for his country felt alone,  
And prized her blood beyond his own.  
Old men, upon the verge of life,  
Bless’d him who stay’d the civil strife ;  
And mothers held their babes on high,  
The self-devoted Chief to spy,  
Triumphant over wrongs and ire,  
To whom the prattlers owed a sire :  
Even the rough soldier’s heart was moved ;  
As if behind some bier beloved,  
With trailing arms and drooping head,  
The Douglas up the hill he led,

And at the Castle's battled verge,  
With sighs resign'd his honor'd charge.

## XXX.

The offended Monarch rode apart,  
With bitter thought and swelling heart,  
And would not now vouchsafe again  
Through Stirling streets to lead his train.  
"O Lennox, who would wish to rule  
This changeling crowd, this common fool?  
Hear'st thou," he said, "the loud acclaim,  
With which they shout the Douglas name?  
With like acclaim, the vulgar throat  
Strain'd for King James their morning note;  
With like acclaim they hail'd the day,  
When first I broke the Douglas' sway;  
And like acclaim would Douglas greet  
If he could hurl me from my seat.  
Who o'er the herd would wish to reign,  
Fantastic, fickle, fierce, and vain!  
Vain as the leaf upon the stream,  
And fickle as a changeful dream;  
Fantastic as a woman's mood,  
And fierce as Frenzy's fever'd blood.  
Thou many-headed monster thing,  
O who would wish to be thy king!

## XXXI.

"But soft! what messenger of speed  
Spurs hitherward his panting steed?  
I guess his cognizance afar —  
What from our cousin, John of Mar?" —  
"He prays, my liege, your sports keep bound  
Within the safe and guarded ground:  
For some foul purpose yet unknown, —  
Most sure for evil to the throne, —  
The outlaw'd Chieftain, Roderick Dhu,  
Has summon'd his rebellious crew;  
'Tis said, in James of Bothwell's aid  
These loose banditti stand array'd.  
The Earl of Mar, this morn, from Doune,  
To break their muster march'd, and soon

Your grace will hear of battle fought ;  
But earnestly the Earl besought,  
Till for such danger he provide,  
With scanty train you will not ride."

## XXXII.

"Thou warn'st me I have done amiss, —  
I should have earlier look'd to this :  
I lost it in this bustling day.  
— Retrace with speed thy former way ;  
Spare not for spoiling of thy steed,  
The best of mine shall be thy need.  
Say to our faithful Lord of Mar,  
We do forbid the intended war ;  
Roderick, this morn, in single fight,  
Was made our prisoner by a knight ;  
And Douglas hath himself and cause  
Submitted to our kingdom's laws.  
The tidings of their leaders lost  
Will soon dissolve the mountain host,  
Nor would we that the vulgar feel,  
For their Chief's crimes, avenging steel.  
Bear Mar our message, Braco ; fly ! " —  
He turn'd his steed, — " My liege, I hie, —  
Yet, ere I cross this lily lawn,  
I fear the broadswords will be drawn."  
The turf the flying courser spurn'd,  
And to his towers the King return'd.

## XXXIII.

Ill with King James' mood that day,  
Suited gay feast and minstrel lay ;  
Soon were dismiss'd the courtly throng,  
And soon cut short the festal song.  
Nor less upon the sadden'd town  
The evening sunk in sorrow down.  
The burghers spoke of civil jar,  
Of rumor'd feuds and mountain war,  
Of Moray, Mar, and Roderick Dhu,  
All up in arms : — the Douglas too,  
They mourn'd him pent within the hold,  
" Where stout Earl William was of old."



And there his word the speaker staid,  
And finger on his lip he laid,  
Or pointed to his dagger blade.  
But jaded horsemen, from the west,  
At evening to the castle press'd ;  
And busy talkers said they bore  
Tidings of fight on Katrine's shore ;  
At noon the deadly fray begun,  
And lasted till the set of sun.  
Thus giddy rumor shook the town,  
Till closed the Night her pennons brown.

## CANTO SIXTH.

## THE GUARD-ROOM.

## I.

THE sun, awakening, through the smoky air  
Of the dark city casts a sullen glance,  
Rousing each caitiff to his task of care,  
Of sinful man the sad inheritance ;  
Summoning revellers from the lagging dance,  
Scaring the prowling robber to his den ;  
Gilding on battled tower the warder's lance,  
And warning student pale to leave his pen,  
And yield his drowsy eyes to the kind nurse of men.

What various scenes, and, O ! what scenes of woe,  
Are witness'd by that red and struggling beam !  
The fever'd patient, from his pallet low,  
Through crowded hospital beholds its stream ;  
The ruin'd maiden trembles at its gleam,  
The debtor wakes to thought of gyve and jail,  
The love-lorn wretch starts from tormenting dream ;  
The wakeful mother, by the glimmering pale,  
Trims her sick infant's couch, and soothes his feeble wail.

## II.

At dawn the towers of Stirling rang  
With soldier-step and weapon-clang,

While drums, with rolling note, foretell  
Relief to weary sentinel.  
Through narrow loop and casement barr'd,  
The sunbeams sought the Court of Guard,  
And, struggling with the smoky air,  
Deaden'd the torches' yellow glare.  
In comfortless alliance shone  
The lights through arch of blacken'd stone,  
And show'd wild shapes in garb of war,  
Faces deform'd with beard and scar,  
All haggard from the midnight watch,  
And fever'd with the stern debauch;  
For the oak table's massive board,  
Flooded with wine, with fragments stored,  
And beakers drain'd, and cups o'erthrown,  
Show'd in what sport the night had flown.  
Some, weary, snored on floor and bench;  
Some labor'd still their thirst to quench;  
Some, chill'd with watching, spread their hands  
O'er the huge chimney's dying brands,  
While round them, or beside them flung,  
At every step their harness rung.

## III.

These drew not for their fields the sword,  
Like tenants of a feudal lord,  
Nor own'd the patriarchal claim  
Of Chieftain in their leader's name;  
Adventurers they, from far who roved,  
To live by battle which they loved.  
There the Italian's clouded face,  
The swarthy Spaniard's there you trace;  
The mountain-loving Switzer there  
More freely breathed in mountain-air;  
The Fleming there despised the soil,  
That paid so ill the laborer's toil;  
Their rolls show'd French and German name;  
And merry England's exiles came,  
To share, with ill-conceal'd disdain,  
Of Scotland's pay the scanty gain.  
All brave in arms, well train'd to wield  
The heavy halberd, brand, and shield;

In camps licentious, wild, and bold ;  
 In pillage fierce and uncontroll'd ;  
 And now, by holytide and feast,  
 From rules of discipline released.

## IV.

They held debate of bloody fray,  
 Fought 'twixt Loch Katrine and Achray.  
 Fierce was their speech, and, 'mid their words,  
 Their hands oft grappled to their swords ;  
 Nor sunk their tone to spare the ear  
 Of wounded comrades groaning near,  
 Whose mangled limbs, and bodies gored,  
 Bore token of the mountain sword,  
 Though, neighboring to the Court of Guard,  
 Their prayers and feverish wails were heard ;  
 Sad burden to the ruffian joke,  
 And savage oath by fury spoke ! —  
 At length up-started John of Brent,  
 A yeoman from the banks of Trent ;  
 A stranger to respect or fear,  
 In peace a chaser of the deer,  
 In host a hardy mutineer,  
 But still the boldest of the crew,  
 When deed of danger was to do.  
 He grieved, that day, their games cut short,  
 And marr'd the dicer's brawling sport,  
 And shouted loud, " Renew the bowl !  
 And, while a merry catch I troll,  
 Let each the buxom chorus bear,  
 Like brethren of the brand and spear."

## V.

## SOLDIER'S SONG.

Our vicar still preaches that Peter and Poule  
 Laid a swinging long curse on the bonny brown bowl,  
 That there's wrath and despair in the jolly black-jack,  
 And the seven deadly sins in a flagon of sack ;  
 Yet whoop, Barnaby ! off with thy liquor,  
 Drink upsees<sup>1</sup> out, and a fig for the vicar !

<sup>1</sup> Bacchanalian interjection, borrowed from the Dutch.

Our vicar he calls it damnation to sip  
 The ripe ruddy dew of a woman's dear lip,  
 Says, that Beelzebub lurks in her kerchief so sly,  
 And Apollyon shoots darts from her merry black eye;  
 Yet whoop, Jack! kiss Gillian the quicker,  
 Till she bloom like a rose, and a fig for the vicar!

Our vicar thus preaches — and why should he not?  
 For the dues of his cure are the placket and pot;  
 And 'tis right of his office poor laymen to lurch,  
 Who infringe the domains of our good Mother Church.  
 Yet whoop, bully-boys! off with your liquor,  
 Sweet Marjorie's the word, and a fig for the vicar!

## VI.

The warder's challenge, heard without,  
 Staid in mid-roar the merry shout.  
 A soldier to the portal went, —  
 "Here is old Bertram, sirs, of Ghent;  
 And, — beat for jubilee the drum!  
 A maid and minstrel with him come."  
 Bertram, a Fleming, gray and scarr'd,  
 Was entering now the Court of Guard,  
 A harper with him, and in plaid  
 All muffled close, a mountain maid,  
 Who backward shrunk to 'scape the view  
 Of the loose scene and boisterous crew.  
 "What news?" they roar'd: — "I only know,  
 From noon till eve we fought with foe,  
 As wild and as untamable  
 As the rude mountains where they dwell;  
 On both sides store of blood is lost,  
 Nor much success can either boast." —  
 "But whence thy captives, friend? such spoil  
 As theirs must needs reward thy toil.  
 Old dost thou wax, and wars grow sharp;  
 Thou now hast glee-maiden and harp!  
 Get thee an ape, and trudge the land,  
 The leader of a juggler band." —

## VII.

"No, comrade; — no such fortune mine.  
 After the fight these sought our line,

That aged harper and the girl,  
 And, having audience of the Earl,  
 Mar bade I should purvey them steed,  
 And bring them hitherward with speed.  
 Forbear your mirth and rude alarm,  
 For none shall do them shame or harm." —  
 "Hear ye his boast?" cried John of Brent,  
 Ever to strife and jangling bent;  
 "Shall he strike doe beside our lodge,  
 And yet the jealous niggard grudge  
 To pay the forester his fee?  
 I'll have my share howe'er it be,  
 Despite of Moray, Mar, or thee."  
 Bertram his forward step withstood;  
 And, burning in his vengeful mood,  
 Old Allan, though unfit for strife,  
 Laid hand upon his dagger-knife;  
 But Ellen boldly stepp'd between,  
 And dropp'd at once the tartan screen. —  
 So, from his morning cloud, appears  
 The sun of May, through summer tears.  
 The savage soldiery, amazed,  
 As on descended angel gazed;  
 Even hardy Brent, abash'd and tamed,  
 Stood half admiring, half ashamed.

## VIII.

Boldly she spoke, — "Soldiers, attend!  
 My father was the soldier's friend;  
 Cheer'd him in camps, in marches led,  
 And with him in the battle bled.  
 Not from the valiant, or the strong,  
 Should exile's daughter suffer wrong." —  
 Answer'd De Brent, most forward still  
 In every feat or good or ill, —  
 "I shame me of the part I play'd:  
 And thou an outlaw's child, poor maid!  
 An outlaw I by forest laws,  
 And merry Needwood knows the cause.  
 Poor Rose, — if Rose be living now," —  
 He wiped his iron eye and brow, —  
 "Must bear such age, I think, as thou.

Hear ye, my mates ; — I go to call  
The Captain of our watch to hall :  
There lies my halberd on the floor ;  
And he that steps my halberd o'er,  
To do the maid injurious part,  
My shaft shall quiver in his heart ! —  
Beware loose speech, or jesting rough :  
Ye all know John de Brent. Enough."

## IX.

Their Captain came, a gallant young, —  
(Of Tullibardine's house he sprung,)  
Nor wore he yet the spurs of knight ;  
Gay was his mien, his humor light,  
And, though by courtesy controll'd,  
Forward his speech, his bearing bold.  
The high-born maiden ill could brook  
The scanning of his curious look  
And dauntless eye ; — and yet, in sooth,  
Young Lewis was a generous youth ;  
But Ellen's lovely face and mien,  
Ill suited to the garb and scene,  
Might lightly bear construction strange,  
And give loose fancy scope to range.  
" Welcome to Stirling towers, fair maid !  
Come ye to seek a champion's aid,  
On palfrey white, with harper hoar,  
Like errant damosel of yore ?  
Does thy high quest a knight require,  
Or may the venture suit a squire ? " —  
Her dark eye flash'd ; — she paused and sigh'd, —  
" O what have I to do with pride ! —  
— Through scenes of sorrow, shame, and strife,  
A suppliant for a father's life,  
I crave an audience of the King.  
Behold, to back my suit, a ring,  
The royal pledge of grateful claims,  
Given by the Monarch to Fitz-James."

## X.

The signet-ring young Lewis took,  
With deep respect and alter'd look ;

And said, — “ This ring our duties own ;  
And pardon, if to worth unknown,  
In semblance mean obscurely veil'd,  
Lady, in aught my folly fail'd.  
Soon as the day flings wide his gates,  
The King shall know what suitor waits.  
Please you, meanwhile, in fitting bower  
Repose you till his waking hour ;  
Female attendance shall obey  
Your hest, for service or array.  
Permit I marshal you the way.”  
But, ere she follow'd, with the grace  
And open bounty of her race,  
She bade her slender purse be shared  
Among the soldiers of the guard.  
The rest with thanks their guerdon took ;  
But Brent, with shy and awkward look,  
On the reluctant maiden's hold  
Forced bluntly back the proffer'd gold ;—  
“ Forgive a haughty English heart,  
And O forget its ruder part !  
The vacant purse shall be my share,  
Which in my barret-cap I'll bear,  
Perchance in jeopardy of war,  
Where gayer crests may keep afar.”  
With thanks, — 'twas all she could — the maid  
His rugged courtesy repaid.

## XI.

When Ellen forth with Lewis went,  
Allan made suit to John of Brent :—  
“ My lady safe, O let your grace  
Give me to see my master's face !  
His minstrel I, — to share his doom  
Bound from the cradle to the tomb.  
Tenth in descent, since first my sires  
Waked for his noble house their lyres,  
Nor one of all the race was known  
But prized its weal above their own.  
With the Chief's birth begins our care ;  
Our harp must soothe the infant heir,  
Teach the youth tales of fight, and grace  
His earliest feat of field or chase ;



In peace, in war, our rank we keep,  
 We cheer his board, we soothe his sleep,  
 Nor leave him till we pour our verse, —  
 A doleful tribute! — o'er his hearse.  
 Then let me share his captive lot;  
 It is my right — deny it not!" —  
 "Little we reck," said John of Brent,  
 "We Southern men, of long descent;  
 Nor wot we how a name — a word —  
 Makes clansmen vassals to a lord:  
 Yet kind my noble landlord's part, —  
 God bless the house of Beaudesert!  
 And, but I loved to drive the deer,  
 More than to guide the laboring steer,  
 I had not dwelt an outcast here.  
 Come, good old Minstrel, follow me;  
 Thy Lord and Chieftain shalt thou see."

## XII.

Then, from a rusted iron hook,  
 A bunch of ponderous keys he took,  
 Lighted a torch, and Allan led  
 Through grated arch and passage dread.  
 Portals they pass'd, where, deep within,  
 Spoke prisoner's moan, and fetters' din;  
 Through rugged vaults, where, loosely stored,  
 Lay wheel, and axe, and headsman's sword,  
 And many a hideous engine grim,  
 For wrenching joint, and crushing limb,  
 By artist form'd, who deem'd it shame  
 And sin to give their work a name.  
 They halted at a low-brow'd porch,  
 And Brent to Allan gave the torch,  
 While bolt and chain he backward roll'd,  
 And made the bar unhasp its hold.  
 They enter'd: — 'twas a prison-room  
 Of stern security and gloom,  
 Yet not a dungeon; for the day  
 Through lofty gratings found its way,  
 And rude and antique garniture  
 Deck'd the sad walls and oaken floor;  
 Such as the rugged days of old  
 Deem'd fit for captive noble's hold.

"Here," said De Brent, "thou may'st remain  
 Till the Leech visit him again.  
 Strict is his charge, the warders tell,  
 To tend the noble prisoner well."  
 Retiring then the bolt he drew,  
 And the lock's murmurs growl'd anew.  
 Roused at the sound, from lowly bed  
 A captive feebly raised his head;  
 The wondering Minstrel look'd, and knew —  
 Not his dear Lord, but Roderick Dhu!  
 For, come from where Clan-Alpine fought,  
 They, erring, deem'd the Chief he sought.

## XIII.

As the tall ship, whose lofty prore  
 Shall never stem the billows more,  
 Deserted by her gallant band,  
 Amid the breakers lies astrand, —  
 So, on his couch, lay Roderick Dhu!  
 And oft his fever'd limbs he threw  
 In toss abrupt, as when her sides  
 Lie rocking in the advancing tides,  
 That shake her frame with ceaseless beat,  
 Yet cannot heave her from her seat; —  
 O! how unlike her course at sea!  
 Or his free step on hill and lea! —  
 Soon as the Minstrel he could scan,  
 — "What of thy lady? — of my clan? —  
 My mother? — Douglas? — tell me all?  
 Have they been ruin'd in my fall?  
 Ah, yes! or wherefore art thou here!  
 Yet speak, — speak boldly, — do not fear." —  
 (For Allan, who his mood well knew,  
 Was choked with grief and terror too.)  
 "Who fought — who fled? — Old man, be brief; —  
 Some might — for they had lost their Chief.  
 Who basely live? — who bravely died?"  
 "O, calm thee, Chief!" the Minstrel cried,  
 "Ellen is safe;" — "For that thank Heaven!" —  
 "And hopes are for the Douglas given; —  
 The Lady Margaret too is well;  
 And, for thy clan, — on field or fell;

Has never harp of minstrel told,  
Of combat fought so true and bold.  
Thy stately Pine is yet unbent,  
Though many a goodly bough is rent."

## XIV.

The Chieftain rear'd his form on high,  
And fever's fire was in his eye ;  
But ghastly, pale, and livid streaks  
Chequer'd his swarthy brow and cheeks.  
—"Hark, Minstrel! I have heard thee play,  
With measure bold, on festal day,  
In yon lone isle, . . . again where ne'er  
Shall harper play, or warrior hear! . . .  
That stirring air that peals on high,  
O'er Dermid's race our victory. —  
Strike it! — and then, (for well thou canst,)  
Free from thy minstrel-spirit glanced,  
Fling me the picture of the fight,  
When met my clan the Saxon might.  
I'll listen, till my fancy hears  
The clang of swords, the crash of spears!  
These grates, these walls, shall vanish then,  
For the fair field of fighting men,  
And my free spirit burst away,  
As if it soar'd from battle fray."  
The trembling Bard with awe obey'd, —  
Slow on the harp his hand he laid;  
But soon remembrance of the sight  
He witness'd from the mountain's height,  
With what old Bertram told at night,  
Awaken'd the full power of song,  
And bore him in career along; —  
As shallop launch'd on river's tide,  
That slow and fearful leaves the side,  
But, when it feels the middle stream,  
Drives downward swift as lightning's beam.

## XV.

## BATTLE OF BEAL' AN DUINE.

"The Minstrel came once more to view  
The eastern ridge of Benvenue,

For ere he parted, he would say  
 Farewell to lovely Loch Achray —  
 Where shall he find, in foreign land,  
 So lone a lake, so sweet a strand ! —  
     There is no breeze upon the fern,  
     Nor ripple on the lake,  
 Upon her eyry nods the erne,  
     The deer has sought the brake ;  
 The small birds will not sing aloud,  
     The springing trout lies still,  
 So darkly glooms yon thunder cloud,  
 That swathes, as with a purple shroud,  
     Benledi's distant hill.  
 Is it the thunder's solemn sound  
     That mutters deep and dread,  
 Or echoes from the groaning ground  
     The warrior's measured tread ?  
 Is t the lightning's quivering glance  
     That on the thicket streams,  
 Or do they flash on spear and lance  
     The sun's retiring beams ?  
 — I see the dagger-crest of Mar,  
 I see the Moray's silver star,  
 Wave o'er the cloud of Saxon war,  
 That up the lake comes winding far !  
     To hero bound for battle-strife,  
     Or bard of martial lay,  
 'Twere worth ten years of peaceful life,  
     One glance at their array !

## XVI.

“ Their light-arm'd archers far and near  
     Survey'd the tangled ground,  
 Their centre ranks, with pike and spear,  
     A twilight forest frown'd,  
 Their barbed horsemen, in the rear,  
     The stern battalia crown'd.  
 No cymbal clash'd, no clarion rang,  
     Still were the pipe and drum ;  
 Save heavy tread, and armor's clang,  
     The sullen march was dumb.  
 There breathed no wind their crests to shake,  
     Or wave their flags abroad ;

Scarce the frail aspen seem'd to quake,  
 That shadow'd o'er their road.  
 Their vaward scouts no tidings bring,  
 Can rouse no lurking foe,  
 Nor spy a trace of living thing,  
 Save when they stirr'd the roe;  
 The host moves like a deep-sea wave,  
 Where rise no rocks its pride to brave,  
 High-swelling, dark, and slow.  
 The lake is pass'd, and now they gain  
 A narrow and a broken plain,  
 Before the Trosachs' rugged jaws :  
 And here the horse and spearmen pause,  
 While, to explore the dangerous glen,  
 Dive through the pass the archer-men.

## XVII.

" At once there rose so wild a yell  
 Within that dark and narrow dell,  
 As all the fiends, from heaven that fell,  
 Had peal'd the banner-cry of hell !  
 Forth from the pass in tumult driven,  
 Like chaff before the wind of heaven,  
 The archery appear :  
 For life ! for life ! their plight they ply —  
 And shriek, and shout, and battle-cry,  
 And plaids and bonnets waving high,  
 And broadswords flashing to the sky,  
 Are maddening in the rear.  
 Onward they drive, in dreadful race,  
 Pursuers and pursued ;  
 Before that tide of flight and chase,  
 How shall it keep its rooted place,  
 The spearmen's twilight wood ? —  
 ' Down, down,' cried Mar, ' your lances down !  
 Bear back both friend and foe ! ' —  
 Like reeds before the tempest's frown,  
 That serried grove of lances brown  
 At once lay levell'd low ;  
 And closely shouldering side to side,  
 The bristling ranks the onset bide. —

'We'll quell the savage mountaineer,  
As their Tinchel<sup>1</sup> cows the game!  
They come as fleet as forest deer,  
We'll drive them back as tame.' —

## XVIII.

"Bearing before them, in their course,  
The relics of the archer force,  
Like wave with crest of sparkling foam,  
Right onward did Clan-Alpine come.  
Above the tide, each broadsword bright  
Was brandishing like beam of light,  
Each targe was dark below ;  
And with the ocean's mighty swing,  
When heaving to the tempest's wing,  
They hurl'd them on the foe.  
I heard the lance's shivering crash,  
As when the whirlwind rends the ash ;  
I heard the broadsword's deadly clang,  
As if an hundred anvils rang!  
But Moray wheel'd his rearward rank  
Of horsemen on Clan-Alpine's flank,  
— 'My banner-man, advance !  
I see,' he cried, 'their column shake.—  
Now, gallants ! for your ladies' sake,  
Upon them with the lance !' —  
The horsemen dash'd among the rout,  
As deer break through the broom ;  
Their steeds are stout, their swords are out,  
They soon make lightsome room.  
Clan-Alpine's best are backward borne —  
Where, where was Roderick then !  
One blast upon his bugle-horn  
Were worth a thousand men.  
And reflux through the pass of fear  
The battle's tide was pour'd ;  
Vanish'd the Saxon's struggling spear,  
Vanish'd the mountain-sword.

<sup>1</sup> A circle of sportsmen, who, by surrounding a great space, and gradually narrowing, brought immense quantities of deer together, which usually made desperate efforts to break through the *Tinchel*.

As Bracklinn's chasm, so black and steep,  
 Receives her roaring linn,  
 As the dark caverns of the deep  
 Suck the wild whirlpool in,  
 So did the deep and darksome pass  
 Devour the battle's mingled mass :  
 None linger now upon the plain,  
 Save those who ne'er shall fight again.

## XIX.

"Now westward rolls the battle's din,  
 That deep and doubling pass within,  
 — Minstrel, away! the work of fate  
 Is bearing on: its issues wait,  
 Where the rude Trosachs' dread defile  
 Opens on Katrine's lake and isle. —  
 Gray Benvenue I soon repass'd,  
 Loch Katrine lay beneath me cast.  
 The sun is set; — the clouds are met,  
 The lowering scowl of heaven  
 An inky hue of livid blue  
 To the deep lake has given ;  
 Strange gusts of wind from mountain-glen  
 Swept o'er the lake, then sunk agen.  
 I heeded not the eddying surge,  
 Mine eye but saw the Trosachs' gorge,  
 Mine ear but heard the sullen sound,  
 Which like an earthquake shook the ground,  
 And spoke the stern and desperate strife  
 That parts not but with parting life,  
 Seeming, to minstrel ear, to toll  
 The dirge of many a passing soul.  
 Nearer it comes — the dim-wood glen  
 The martial flood disgorged agen,  
 But not in mingled tide ;  
 The plaided warriors of the North  
 High on the mountain thunder forth  
 And overhang its side ;  
 While by the lake below appears  
 The dark'ning cloud of Saxon spears.  
 At weary bay each shatter'd band,  
 Eyeing their foemen, sternly stand ;



Their banners stream like tatter'd sail,  
That flings its fragments to the gale,  
And broken arms and disarray  
Mark'd the fell havoc of the day.

## XX.

"Viewing the mountain's ridge askance,  
The Saxon stood in sullen trance,  
Till Moray pointed with his lance,  
And cried — 'Behold yon isle ! —  
See ! none are left to guard its strand,  
But women weak, that wring the hand :  
'Tis there of yore the robber band  
Their booty wont to pile ; —  
My purse, with bonnet-pieces store,  
To him will swim a bow-shot o'er,  
And loose a shallop from the shore.  
Lightly we'll tame the war-wolf then,  
Lords of his mate, and brood, and den.'  
Forth from the ranks a spearman sprung,  
On earth his casque and corslet rung,  
He plunged him in the wave : —  
All saw the deed — the purpose knew,  
And to their clamors Benvenue  
A mingled echo gave ;  
The Saxons shout, their mate to cheer,  
The helpless females scream for fear,  
And yells for rage the mountaineer.  
'Twas then, as by the outcry riven,  
Pour'd down at once the lowering heaven ;  
A whirlwind swept Loch Katrine's breast,  
Her billows rear'd their snowy crest.  
Well for the swimmer swell'd they high,  
To mar the Highland marksman's eye ;  
For round him shower'd, 'mid rain and hail,  
The vengeful arrows of the Gael. —  
In vain — He nears the isle — and lo !  
His hand is on a shallop's bow.  
— Just then a flash of lightning came,  
It tinged the waves and strand with flame ; —  
I mark'd Duncraggan's widow'd dame,  
Behind an oak I saw her stand,  
A naked dirk gleam'd in her hand : —

It darken'd, — but amid the moan  
Of waves, I heard a dying groan ; —  
Another flash ! — the spearman floats  
A weltering corse beside the boats,  
And the stern matron o'er him stood,  
Her hand and dagger streaming blood.

## XXI.

“ ‘Revenge ! revenge !’ the Saxons cried,  
The Gaels’ exulting shout replied.  
Despite the elemental rage,  
Again they hurried to engage ;  
But, ere they closed in desperate fight,  
Bloody with spurring came a knight,  
Sprung from his horse, and, from a crag,  
Waved ’twixt the hosts a milk-white flag.  
Clarion and trumpet by his side  
Rung forth a truce-note high and wide,  
While, in the Monarch’s name, afar  
An herald’s voice forbade the war,  
For Bothwell’s lord, and Roderick bold,  
Were both, he said, in captive hold.”  
— But here the lay made sudden stand,  
The harp escaped the Minstrel’s hand ! —  
Oft had he stolen a glance, to spy  
How Roderick brook’d his minstrelsy :  
At first, the Chieftain, to the chime,  
With lifted hand, kept feeble time ;  
That motion ceased, — yet feeling strong  
Varied his look as changed the song ;  
At length, no more his deafen’d ear  
The minstrel melody can hear ;  
His face grows sharp, — his hands are clench’d,  
As if some pang his heart-strings wrench’d ;  
Set are his teeth, his fading eye  
Is sternly fix’d on vacancy ;  
Thus, motionless, and moanless, drew  
His parting breath, stout Roderick Dhu ! —  
Old Allan-bane look’d on aghast,  
While grim and still his spirit pass’d ;  
But when he saw that life was fled,  
He pour’d his wailing o’er the dead.

## XXII.

## LAMENT.

“And art thou cold and lowly laid,  
 Thy foemen’s dread, thy people’s aid,  
 Breadalbane’s boast, Clan-Alpine’s shade !  
 For thee shall none a requiem say ? —  
 For thee, — who loved the minstrel’s lay,  
 For thee, of Bothwell’s house the stay,  
 The shelter of her exiled line,  
 E’en in this prison-house of thine,  
 I’ll wail for Alpine’s honor’d Pine !

“What groans shall yonder valleys fill !  
 What shrieks of grief shall rend yon hill !  
 What tears of burning rage shall thrill,  
 When mourns thy tribe thy battles done,  
 Thy fall before the race was won,  
 Thy sword ungirt ere set of sun !  
 There breathes not clansman of thy line,  
 But would have given his life for thine. —  
 O woe for Alpine’s honor’d Pine !

“Sad was thy lot on mortal stage ! —  
 The captive thrush may brook the cage,  
 The prison’d eagle dies for rage.  
 Brave spirit, do not scorn my strain !  
 And, when its notes awake again,  
 Even she, so long beloved in vain,  
 Shall with my harp her voice combine,  
 And mix her woe and tears with mine,  
 To wail Clan-Alpine’s honor’d Pine.” —

## XXIII.

Ellen, the while, with bursting heart,  
 Remain’d in lordly bower apart,  
 Where play’d, with many-color’d gleams,  
 Through storied pane the rising beams.  
 In vain on gilded roof they fall,  
 And lighten’d up a tapestried wall,  
 And for her use a menial train  
 A rich collation spread in vain.  
 The banquet proud, the chamber gay,  
 Scarce drew one curious glance astray ;

Or if she look'd, 'twas but to say,  
With better omen dawn'd the day  
In that lone isle, where waved on high  
The dun-deer's hide for canopy;  
Where oft her noble father shared  
The simple meal her care prepared,  
While Lufra, crouching by her side,  
Her station claim'd with jealous pride,  
And Douglas, bent on woodland game,  
Spoke of the chase to Malcolm Græme,  
Whose answer, oft at random made,  
The wandering of his thoughts betray'd. —  
Those who such simple joys have known,  
Are taught to prize them when they're gone.  
But sudden, see, she lifts her head!  
The window seeks with cautious tread.  
What distant music has the power  
To win her in this woful hour!  
'Twas from a turret that o'erhung  
Her latticed bower, the strain was sung.

## XXIV.

## LAY OF THE IMPRISONED HUNTSMAN.

“My hawk is tired of perch and hood,  
My idle greyhound loathes his food,  
My horse is weary of his stall,  
And I am sick of captive thrall.  
I wish I were as I have been,  
Hunting the hart in forest green,  
With bended bow and bloodhound free,  
For that's the life is meet for me.  
I hate to learn the ebb of time,  
From yon dull steeple's drowsy chime,  
Or mark it as the sunbeams crawl,  
Inch after inch, along the wall.  
The lark was wont my matins ring,  
The sable rook my vespers sing;  
These towers, although a king's they be,  
Have not a hall of joy for me.  
No more at dawning morn I rise,  
And sun myself in Ellen's eyes,

Drive the fleet deer the forest through,  
And homeward wend with evening dew;  
A blithesome welcome blithely meet,  
And lay my trophies at her feet,  
While fled the eve on wing of glee, —  
That life is lost to love and me!”

## XXV.

The heart-sick lay was hardly said,  
The list'ner had not turn'd her head,  
It trickled still, the starting tear,  
When light a footstep struck her ear,  
And Snowdown's graceful Knight was near.  
She turn'd the hastier, lest again  
The prisoner should renew his strain.  
“O welcome, brave Fitz-James!” she said;  
“How may an almost orphan maid  
Pay the deep debt” — “O say not so!  
To me no gratitude you owe.  
Not mine, alas! the boon to give,  
And bid thy noble father live;  
I can but be thy guide, sweet maid,  
With Scotland's King thy suit to aid.  
No tyrant he, though ire and pride  
May lay his better mood aside.  
Come, Ellen, come! 'tis more than time,  
He holds his court at morning prime.”  
With beating heart, and bosom wrung,  
As to a brother's arm she clung.  
Gently he dried the falling tear,  
And gently whisper'd hope and cheer;  
Her faltering steps half led, half staid,  
Through gallery fair and high arcade,  
Till, at his touch, its wings of pride  
A portal arch unfolded wide.

## XXVI.

Within 'twas brilliant all and light,  
A thronging scene of figures bright;  
It glow'd on Ellen's dazzled sight,  
As when the setting sun has given  
Ten thousand hues to summer even,

And from their tissue, fancy frames  
Aerial knights and fairy dames.  
Still by Fitz-James her footing staid ;  
A few faint steps she forward made,  
Then slow her drooping head she raised,  
And fearful round the presence gazed ;  
For him she sought, who own'd this state,  
The dreaded Prince whose will was fate ! —  
She gazed on many a princely port,  
Might well have ruled a royal court ;  
On many a splendid garb she gazed, —  
Then turn'd bewilder'd and amazed,  
For all stood bare ; and, in the room,  
Fitz-James alone wore cap and plume.  
To him each lady's look was lent ;  
On him each courtier's eye was bent ;  
Midst furs and silks and jewels sheen,  
He stood, in simple Lincoln green,  
The centre of the glittering ring, —  
And Snowdown's Knight is Scotland's King.

## XXVII.

As wreath of snow, on mountain-breast,  
Slides from the rock that gave it rest,  
Poor Ellen glided from her stay,  
And at the Monarch's feet she lay ;  
No word her choking voice commands, —  
She show'd the ring — she clasp'd her hands.  
O ! not a moment could he brook,  
The generous Prince, that suppliant look !  
Gently he raised her, — and, the while,  
Check'd with a glance the circle's smile ;  
Graceful, but grave, her brow he kiss'd,  
And bade her terrors be dismiss'd : —  
“ Yes, Fair ; the wandering poor Fitz-James  
The fealty of Scotland claims.  
To him thy woes, thy wishes, bring ;  
He will redeem his signet ring.  
Ask nought for Douglas ; — yester even,  
His Prince and he have much forgiven :  
Wrong hath he had from slanderous tongue,  
I, from his rebel kinsmen, wrong.  
We would not, to the vulgar crowd,

Yield what they craved with clamor loud ;  
 Calmly we heard and judged his cause,  
 Our council aided, and our laws.  
 I stanch'd thy father's death-feud stern,  
 With stout De Vaux and Gray Glencairn ;  
 And Bothwell's Lord henceforth we own  
 The friend and bulwark of our Throne. —  
 But, lovely infidel, how now ?  
 What clouds thy misbelieving brow ?  
 Lord James of Douglas, lend thine aid ;  
 Thou must confirm this doubting maid."

## XXVIII.

Then forth the noble Douglas sprung,  
 And on his neck his daughter hung.  
 The monarch drank, that happy hour,  
 The sweetest, holiest draught of Power, —  
 When it can say, with godlike voice,  
 Arise, sad Virtue, and rejoice !  
 Yet would not James the general eye  
 On Nature's raptures long should pry ;  
 He stepp'd between — "Nay, Douglas, nay,  
 Steal not my proselyte away !  
 The riddle 'tis my right to read,  
 That brought this happy chance to speed.  
 — Yes, Ellen, when disguised I stray  
 In life's more low but happier way,  
 'Tis under name which veils my power,  
 Nor falsely veils — for Stirling's tower  
 Of yore the name of Snowdown claims,  
 And Normans call me James Fitz-James.  
 Thus watch I o'er insulted laws,  
 Thus learn to right the injured cause." —  
 Then, in a tone apart and low, —  
 "Ah, little traitress ! none must know  
 What idle dream, what lighter thought,  
 What vanity full dearly bought,  
 Join'd to thine eye's dark witchcraft, drew  
 My spell-bound steps to Benvenue,  
 In dangerous hour, and all but gave  
 Thy monarch's life to mountain glaive !" —  
 Aloud he spoke — "Thou still dost hold  
 That little talisman of gold,



Pledge of my faith, Fitz-James's ring —  
What seeks fair Ellen of the King?"

## XXIX.

Full well the conscious maiden guess'd  
He probed the weakness of her breast;  
But, with that consciousness, there came  
A lightening of her fears for Græme,  
And more she deem'd the monarch's ire  
Kindled 'gainst him, who, for her sire  
Rebellious broadsword boldly drew;  
And, to her generous feeling true,  
She craved the grace of Roderick Dhu.  
"Forbear thy suit: — the King of kings  
Alone can stay life's parting wings,  
I know his heart, I know his hand,  
Have shared his cheer, and proved his brand: —  
My fairest earldom would I give  
To bid Clan-Alpine's Chieftain live! —  
Hast thou no other boon to crave?  
No other captive friend to save?"  
Blushing, she turn'd her from the King,  
And to the Douglas gave the ring,  
As if she wish'd her sire to speak  
The suit that stain'd her glowing cheek. —  
"Nay, then, my pledge has lost its force,  
And stubborn justice holds her course. —  
Malcolm, come forth!" — and, at the word,  
Down kneel'd the Græme to Scotland's Lord.  
"For thee, rash youth, no suppliant sues,  
From thee may Vengeance claim her dues,  
Who, nurtured underneath our smile,  
Hast paid our care by treacherous wile,  
And sought, amid thy faithful clan,  
A refuge for an outlaw'd man,  
Dishonoring thus thy loyal name. —  
Fetters and warder for the Græme!" —  
His chain of gold the King unstrung,  
The links o'er Malcolm's neck he flung,  
Then gently drew the glittering band,  
And laid the clasp on Ellen's hand.

HARP of the North, farewell ! The hills grow dark,  
On purple peaks a deeper shade descending ;  
In twilight copse the glow-worm lights her spark,  
The deer, half-seen, are to the covert wending.  
Resume thy wizard elm ! the fountain lending,  
And the wild breeze, thy wilder minstrelsy ;  
Thy numbers sweet with nature's vespers blending,  
With distant echo from the fold and lea,  
And herd-boy's evening pipe, and hum of housing bee.

Yet, once again, farewell, thou Minstrel harp !  
Yet, once again, forgive my feeble sway,  
And little reck I of the censure sharp  
May idly cavil at an idle lay.  
Much have I owed thy strains on life's long way,  
Through secret woes the world has never known,  
When on the weary night dawn'd wearier day,  
And bitterer was the grief devour'd alone.  
That I o'erlived such woes, Enchantress ! is thine own.

Hark ! as my lingering footsteps slow retire,  
Some Spirit of the Air has waked thy string !  
'Tis now a seraph bold, with touch of fire,  
'Tis now the brush of Fairy's frolic wing.  
Receding now, the dying numbers ring  
Fainter and fainter down the rugged dell,  
And now the mountain breezes scarcely bring  
A wandering witch-note of the distant spell—  
And now, 'tis silent all !—Enchantress, fare thee well !



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